

Genesis



Rudolf Steiner

GENESIS

Secrets of the Bible Story of Creation

RUDOLF STEINER

Ten lectures given in Munich 17–26 August 1910

Anthroposophical Publishing Company London
Revised Translation
1959

This translation has been made by Dorothy Lenn with the assistance of Owen Barfield from the revised 3rd edition of the German text-published under the title, “*Die Geheimnisse der biblischen Schöpfungsgeschichte.*” For the convenience of English readers quotations from the Bible have been given in the words of the English Authorised Version, or if this has seemed impracticable, the Authorised Version has been given in a footnote.

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Secrets of the Bible Story of Creation

In his autobiography, *The Course of my Life* (chapters 35 and 36), Rudolf Steiner speaks as follows concerning the character and records of lectures and addresses printed originally for private circulation:

“... The contents of this printed matter were intended as oral communications and not for print.

...

“... They contain nothing that is not a pure expression of anthroposophical knowledge in its progressive development and growth ... the reader may confidently take them as representing what Anthroposophy has to tell. Therefore it was

possible, and moreover without misgivings ... to depart from the accepted custom of circulating these publications only among the membership. But it will have to be remembered that faulty passages occur in the transcripts, which I myself did not revise.

“... It is only reasonable to expect that anyone professing to pass judgment on the contents of this privately printed matter will be acquainted with the premises that were taken for granted when the words were spoken. These premises include, at the very least, the anthroposophical knowledge of Man and of the Cosmos in its spiritual essence; also what may be called ‘anthroposophical History,’ told as an outcome of research into the spiritual world.”

ERRATUM: Correction to Table 11 p. 59: Add 'Water' after 'Air' in last column

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LECTURE I

IF anyone who has a background of Spiritual Science, and has absorbed something of its teaching about the evolution of the world, then goes on to study those tremendous opening words of our Bible, an entirely new world should dawn upon him.

There is probably no account of human evolution so open to misinterpretation as this record known as Genesis, the description of the creation of the world in six or seven days. When the man of today calls to life in his soul, in any language familiar to him, the words *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth*, they convey to him scarcely a faint reflection of what lived in the soul of an ancient Hebrew who allowed the words to work upon him. It is not in the least a question of being

able to replace the old words by modern ones; it is much more important that we should have been prepared by Anthroposophy to feel at least something of the mood which lived in the heart and mind of the Hebrew pupil of old when he brought to life within himself the words: *B'reshit tiara elohim et haschamayim w'et ha'arets*. [1] A whole world lived while such words were vibrating through his soul.

What was it like — this inner world which lived in the soul of the pupil? We can only compare it with what can take place in the soul of a man to whom a seer has described the pictures he experienced on looking into the spiritual world. For what in the last resort is Spiritual Science but the outcome of seership, of the living intuitions which the seer receives when, having freed himself from the conditions of sense-perception and of the intellect bound up with the physical body, he looks with spiritual organs into the spiritual worlds? If he wishes to translate what he sees there into the language of the physical world, he can only do so in pictures, but if his descriptive powers suffice, he

will do it in pictures which are able to awaken in his hearers a mental image corresponding with what he himself sees in the spiritual worlds. Thereby something comes into existence which must not be mistaken for a description of things and events in the physical sense-world; something comes into existence which we must never forget belongs to an entirely different world — a world which does indeed underlie and maintain the ordinary sense-world of our ideas, impressions and perceptions, yet in no way coincides with that world.

If we want to portray the origin of this our sense-world, including the origin of man himself, our ideas cannot be confined to that world itself. No science equipped only with ideas borrowed from the world of the senses can reach the origin of sense-existence. For sense-existence is rooted in the supersensible, and although we can go a long way back historically, or geologically, we must realise that, if we are to reach to actual origins, there is a certain point in the far distant past at which we must leave the field of the sense-

perceptible and penetrate into regions that can only be grasped supersensibly. What we call Genesis does not begin with the description of anything perceptible by the senses, anything which the eye could see in the physical world. In the course of these lectures we shall become thoroughly convinced that it would be quite wrong to take the opening words of Genesis as referring to events which can be seen with the outward eye. So long as one connects the words “heaven and earth” with any residue of the sensuously visible one has not reached the stage to which the first part of the Genesis account points us back. Today there is practically no way of obtaining light upon the world it describes except through Spiritual Science. Through Spiritual Science we may indeed hope to approach the mystery of the archetypal words with which the Bible opens, and to get some inkling of their content.

Wherein lies their peculiar secret? It lies in the fact that they are written in the Hebrew tongue, a language which works upon the soul quite differently from any modern language. Although

the Hebrew of these early chapters may not perhaps have the same effect today, at one time it did work in such a way that when a letter was sounded it called up in the soul a picture. Pictures arose in the soul of anyone who entered with lively sympathy into the words, and allowed them to work upon him — pictures harmoniously arranged, organic pictures, pictures which may be compared with what the seer can still see today when he rises from the sensible to the supersensible. The Hebrew language, or, better said, the language of the first chapters of the Bible, enabled the soul to call up imaginal pictures which were not wholly unlike those that are presented to the seer when, freed from his body, he is able to look into supersensible regions of existence.

In order to realise in some measure the power of these archetypal words we must disregard the pale and shadowy impressions which any modern language makes upon the soul, and try to get some idea of the creative power inherent in sound-sequences in this ancient tongue. It is of immense importance that in the course of these lectures we

too should seek to place before our souls the very pictures which arose in the Hebrew pupil of old when these sounds worked creatively in him. In fact we must find a method of penetrating the primeval record entirely different from those used by modern research.

I have now given you an indication of our line of approach. We shall only slowly and gradually learn to comprehend what lived in the ancient Hebrew sage when he allowed those most powerful words to work upon him, words which we do at least still possess. So our next task will be to free ourselves as far as possible from the familiar, and from the ideas and images of “heaven and earth,” of “Gods,” of “creation,” of “in the beginning,” which we have hitherto held. The more thoroughly we can do this the better we shall be able to penetrate into the spirit of a document which arose out of psychic conditions quite different from those of today.

First of all we must be quite clear as to the point of time in evolution we are speaking of, when we deal with the opening words of the Bible. You

know of course that contemporary clairvoyant investigation makes it possible to describe to some extent the origin and development of our earth and of human existence. In my book *Occult Science*, I tried to describe the gradual growth of our earth as the planetary scene of human existence, through the three preliminary stages of Saturn, Sun and Moon. [2] Today you will have in mind, at least in broad outline, what I described there. At what point then in the spiritual scientific account should we place what draws near to our souls in the mighty word *B'reschit*? Where does it belong?

If we look back for a moment to ancient Saturn, we picture it as a cosmic body having as yet nothing of the material existence to which we are accustomed. Of all that we find in our own environment it has nothing but heat. No air or water or solid earth is as yet to be found upon ancient Saturn; even where it is densest, there is only fire — living, weaving warmth. Then, to this living, weaving warmth, a kind of air or gaseous element is added; and we have a true picture of the Sun existence if we think of it as an interweaving,

an interpenetration, of a gaseous, airy element and a warmth element. Then comes the third condition, which we call the Moon evolution. There the watery element is added to the warmth and the air. There is as yet nothing of what in our present earth we call solid. But the old Moon evolution has a peculiar characteristic. It divides into two parts. If we look back upon old Saturn, we see it as a single whole of weaving warmth; and the old Sun we still see as a mingling of gaseous and warmth elements. During the Moon existence there takes place this separation into a part which is Sun and a part which retains the Moon nature. It is only when we come to the fourth stage of our planetary evolution that the earth element is added to the earlier warmth, gaseous and watery elements. In order that this solid element could come into existence, the division which had taken place previously during the Moon evolution had first to repeat itself. Once again the sun had to withdraw. Thus there is a certain moment in the evolution of our planet when, out of the universal complication of fire and air and water, the denser, more earthy element separates from the finer, gaseous element

of the sun; and it is only in this earthy element that what we today call solid is able to form.

Let us concentrate on this moment, when the sun withdraws from its former state of union with the rest of the planet and begins to send its forces to the earth from without. Let us bear in mind that this was what made it possible, within the earth, for the solid element — what we today call matter — to begin to condense. If we fix this moment firmly in our minds we have the point of time at which Genesis, the creation story, begins. This is what it is describing. We should not associate with the opening words of Genesis the abstract, shadowy idea we get when we say “In the beginning,” which is something unspeakably poverty-stricken compared with what the ancient Hebrew sage felt. If we would bring the sound B'reschit before our souls in the right way, there must arise before us — in the only way it can do so, in mental images — all that happened through the severance of sun and earth, all that was to be found at the actual moment when the separation into two had just taken place. Furthermore we

must be aware that throughout the whole of the Saturn, Sun and Moon evolutions, spiritual Beings were its leaders and its bearers; and that warmth, air, water are only the outer expressions, the outer garments of spiritual Beings who are the reality. Thus when we contemplate the condition which obtained at the moment of separation of sun and earth, and picture it to ourselves in thoughts full of material images, we must also be conscious that the elementary “water,” “air,” “fire,” which we have in our mind's eye, is still only the means of expression for moving, weaving spirit which, during the course of the preceding Saturn, Sun and Moon stages has advanced, has progressed, and at the time now being described has reached a certain stage in its evolution.

Let us place before us the picture of an immense cosmic globe, composed of weaving elements of water, air or gas and fire, a globe which splits apart into a solar and a telluric element; but let us conceive too that this elementary substance is only the expression of a spiritual. Let us imagine that from this substantial habitation, woven of the

elements of water, air and heat, the countenances of spiritual Beings, weaving within it, look out upon us, spiritual Beings who reveal themselves in this element which we have had to represent to ourselves through material images. Let us imagine that we have before us spiritual Beings, turning their countenances towards us, as it were, using their own soul-spiritual forces to organise cosmic bodies with the help of warmth, air and water. Let us try to imagine this!

There we have a picture of an elementary sheath, which, to give a very rough sensuous image of it, we may perhaps liken to a snail-shell, but a shell woven not of solid matter, like the snail's, but from the forest elements of water, air and fire. Let us think of spirit, in the form of countenances, within this sheath, gazing upon us, using this sheath as a means of manifestation, a force of very revelation which, as it were, pricks outward into manifestation from what lies hidden in the supersensible.

Call up before your souls this picture which I have just tried to paint for you, this image of the living

weaving of spirit in a kind of matter; imagine too the inner soul-force which causes it to happen; concentrate for a moment on this to the exclusion of all else, and you will then have something approximating to what lived in an ancient Hebrew sage when the sounds B'reschit penetrated his soul. *Bet* [3], the first letter, called forth the weaving of the habitation in substance; *Resch* [3], the second sound, summoned up the countenances of the spiritual Beings who wove within this dwelling, and *Schin* [3], the third sound, the prickly, stinging force which worked its way out from within to manifestation.

Now the underlying principle behind such a description is dawning upon us. And when we have grasped that, we are able to appreciate something of the spirit of this language; it had a creativeness of which the modern man with his abstract speech has no inkling.

Now let us place ourselves at the moment immediately preceding the physical coagulation, the physical densification of our earth. Let us imagine it as vividly as possible. We shall have to

admit that in describing what was taking place at that moment we cannot make use of any of the ideas which we use today to describe processes in the external sense-world. Hence you will see that it is utterly inadequate to associate any external deed with the second word we meet in Genesis — *bara* — however closely that deed might resemble what we understand today as creation. We do not thus get near to the meaning of that word. Where can we turn for help? The word implies something which lies very near the boundary where the sensible passes over directly into the supersensible, into pure spirit. And anyone who wishes to grasp the meaning of the word *bara*, which is usually translated “created” (*In the beginning God created ...*), must in no wise associate it with any productive activity which can be seen with physical eyes.

Take a look into your own inner being! Imagine yourselves as having been asleep for a while, then waking up, and, without opening your eyes to things around you, calling up in your souls by inner activity certain images. Bring home vividly

to yourselves this inner activity, this productive meditation, this cogitation, which calls forth a soul-content from the depths of the soul as if by magic. If you like you can use the word “excogitate” for this conjuring up of a soul-content out of the depths into the field of consciousness; think of this activity, which man can only perform with his mental images, but think of it now as a real, cosmic, creative activity. Instead of your own meditation, your own inward experience in thinking, try to imagine cosmic thinking-then you have the content of the second word of Genesis, *bara*. However spiritually you may think it, you can only liken it to the thought-life you are able to bring before yourselves in your own musing, you cannot get nearer to it than that!

And now imagine that during your musing two kinds of images come before your souls. Suppose there is a man to whom on awakening two different kinds of thought occur, a man who muses about two different kinds of thing. Suppose that one kind of thought is the picture either of some activity, or of some external thing or of some

being; it does not come about through external sight, through perception, but through reflection, through the creative activity of his soul in the field of his consciousness. Suppose that the second complex of ideas which arises in this awakening man is a desire, something which the man's whole disposition and constitution of soul can prompt him to will. We have elements both of thought and of desire coming up in our souls through inner reflection. Now imagine, instead of the human soul, the Beings called in Genesis the Elohim, reflecting within themselves. Instead of one human soul, think of a multiplicity of reflecting spiritual Beings, who, however, in a similar way — save that their musing is cosmic — call forth by reflection from within themselves two complexes which might be compared with what I have just been describing — a pure thought-element and an element of desire. Thus instead of thinking of the musing' human soul, we think of a group of cosmic Beings who awaken in themselves two complexes; one of the nature of thought or ideation, that is, one which manifests something, expresses itself outwardly, phenomenally; and

another of the nature of desire, which lives in inner movement, inner stimulation, which is permeated with inner activity. Let us think of these cosmic Beings, who are called in Genesis the Elohim, musing in this way. The word *bara*, “created,” brings their musing home to us. Then let us think that through this creative musing two complexes arise, one tending towards external revelation, external manifestation, and another consisting of an inward stimulus, an inward life; then we have the two complexes which arose in the soul of the ancient Hebrew sage when the words *haschamayim* and *ha'arets* — represented for the modern man by “heaven” and “earth” — sounded through his soul. Let us try to forget the modern man's conception of “heaven and earth.” Let us try to bring the two complexes before the soul, the one which tends more to disclose itself, tends to outward manifestation, is disposed to call forth some outside effect; and the other complex, the complex of inner stimulation, of something which would experience itself inwardly, something which quickens itself inwardly; then we have what expresses the meaning of the two words

haschamayim and *ha'arets*.

As for the Elohim themselves, what kind of Beings are they? In the course of these lectures we shall learn to know them better, and to describe them in terms of Spiritual Science; but for the present let us try to reach in some measure the meaning of this archetypal word "*Elohim*." Whoever wishes to get an idea of what lived in the soul of the ancient Hebrew sage when he used this word should clearly understand that in those days there was a lively comprehension of the fact that our earth evolution had a definite meaning and a definite goal. What was this meaning and this goal?

Our earth evolution can only have a meaning, if during its course something arises which was not there before. A perpetual repetition of what was already there would be a meaningless existence, and unless the Hebrew sage of old had known that our earth, after having passed through its preliminary stages, had to bring something new into existence, he would have regarded its genesis as meaningless. Through the coming into existence

of the earth something new became possible, it became possible for man to become man as we know him. In none of the earlier stages of evolution was man present as the being he is today, the being that he will more and more become in the future; that was not possible in earlier stages. And those spiritual Beings who directed the Saturn, Sun and Moon evolutions were of a different nature from man — for the moment we will not enter into the question whether they were higher or lower. Those Beings who wove in the fiery, gaseous and watery stages of elementary existence, who wove a Saturn, Sun and Moon existence, who at the beginning of earth existence were weaving its fabric — how best do we come to know them? ... How can we draw near to them?

We should have to go into very many things to get anywhere near an understanding of these Beings. To begin with, however, we can come to know one aspect of them, and that will suffice to bring us at least one step nearer to the potent meaning of the ancient Bible words. Let us consider those Beings

for a moment — the Beings who stood nearest to man at the time when he was created from what had developed out of the Saturn, Sun and Moon evolutions. Let us ask those Beings what they really wanted. Let us ask them what was their will, their purpose. Then we shall be able to get at least some idea of their nature. They had great ability; in the course of their evolution they had acquired capacities in various directions. One of them could do this, another that. But we understand the nature of these Beings best if we realise that at the time we are now considering they were working as a group towards a common goal; they were moved by a common aim. Although at a higher level, it is as if a group of men, each with his own special skill, were to co-operate today. Each of them can do something, and now they say to each other: “You can do this, I can do that, the third among us can do something else. We will unite our activities to produce a work in common in which each of our capacities can be used.” Let us then imagine such a group of men, a group each of whom practises a different craft, but which is united by a common aim. What they intend to bring into

existence is not yet there. The unit at which they are working lives to begin with only as an aim. What is there is a multiplicity. The unit lives, to begin with, only as an ideal. Now think of a group of spiritual Beings who have passed through the evolutions of Saturn, Sun and Moon, each one of whom has a specific ability, and who all at the moment I have indicated make the decision: “We will combine our activities for a common end, we will all work in the same direction.” And the picture of this goal arose before each of them. What was this goal? It was man, earthly man!

Thus earthly man lived as the ultimate goal in a group of spiritual Beings who had resolved to combine their several skills in order to arrive at something which they themselves did not possess at all, something which did not belong to them, but which they were able to achieve by combined effort. If you accept all that I have described to you — the elementary sheath, the cosmic, meditative spiritual Beings working within it, the two complexes, one of desire quickening inwardly, and another manifesting outwardly — and then

ascribe the common purpose I have just mentioned to those spiritual Beings whose countenances gaze out of the elementary sheath, then you have what lived in the heart of the Hebrew sage of old in the word *Elohim*.

Now we have brought before us in picture form what lives in these all-powerful archetypal words. Then let us forget all that a man of today can think and feel when he utters the words: *In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth*. Bearing in mind all that I have told you today, try to put this picture before you. There is the sphere in which fiery, gaseous and watery elements weave. Within this active, weaving elementary sphere a group of pondering spiritual Beings live. They are engaged in productive pondering, their pondering is penetrated through and through by their intention to direct their whole operation towards the form of man. And the first-fruits of their musing is the idea of something manifesting itself outwardly, announcing itself, and something else inwardly active, inwardly animated.

“In the elementary sheath the primeval Spirits pondered the outwardly manifesting and the inwardly mobile.” Try to bring before yourselves in these terms what is said in the first lines of the Bible, then you will have a foundation for all that is to come before our souls in the next few days as the true meaning of those all-powerful archetypal words which contain such a sublime revelation for mankind — the revelation of its own origin.

Notes:

[1]

בְּרֵאשִׁית בָּרָא אֱלֹהִים אֶת הַשָּׁמַיִם וְאֶת הָאָרֶץ

Diagram 1

To avoid any ambiguity, capital letters will be used throughout this book for the words Sun and Moon, when they refer to the planetary evolutions preceding that of our earth.

* *Bet*
ב

† *Resch*
ר

‡ *Schin*
ש

Diagram 2

LECTURE II

IN a good many places in this course of lectures — as well as elsewhere in our Anthroposophical discussions — it may well sound as if I rather enjoyed having to set myself up in opposition, or apparent opposition, to “modern science.” I am thinking more of people in the outside world unacquainted with the kind of feeling that prevails in our circles, but it is a point on which I am particularly anxious to avoid any misunderstanding. You may take it as definite that it is a very real effort for me to do anything of the sort; and that I only do it precisely at those points where I myself am able to develop or carry further what science has to say. My sense of responsibility is such that it will not permit me to bring forward anything that conflicts with the opinions of modern science, unless I have first placed myself

in a position to understand, and if necessary reproduce, its findings on the subject in hand. No one having such an attitude could possibly approach the all-important matters which are to occupy us in the next few days without the deepest sense of awe and of the responsibility that goes with it.

Unfortunately, it just has to be said that, as regards the questions now to come before us, modern science breaks down altogether. The scientists are not even in a position to know why this should be so, or to perceive why their science must necessarily prove so hopelessly amateurish in face of the real and the great problems of existence. So, although in a short course of lectures it is naturally not possible to engage in controversy about every detail, please take it for granted that behind all I say I am fully aware of the modern scientific outlook on these subjects. Only, as far as possible, I must confine myself to what is positive, and trust that in a circle of Anthroposophists this will always be understood.

In the last lecture I tried to show how those tremendous, archetypal words with which the Bible opens — words which are put before us in a language different in its very nature from modern tongues — can only be rightly interpreted if we try to forget the attitude of mind and feeling we have acquired as a result of the usual modern renderings. For the language in which these powerful words of creation were originally given to us has actually the peculiarity that the very character of its sounds directs the heart and mind towards those pictures which arise before the eye of the seer when he contemplates the moment of the welling-forth of the sense-perceptible part of our world out of the supersensible. Every single sound in which the immemorial origin of our earth existence is placed before us is full of active power. In the course of these lectures we shall often have to refer to the character of this language; today, however, let us confine ourselves to one of the first essentials.

You know that in the Bible, after the words which yesterday I at least tried to put before your souls in

picture form, there comes a description of one of the complexes which arose out of the divine meditation, out of the divine productive musing. I told you that we have to conceive that, as if out of a cosmic memory, two complexes arose. One was a complex which may be compared with the thoughts which can arise in us; the other is of the nature of desire or will. The one complex contains all that tends towards outer manifestation, tends to proclaim itself, tends, as it were, to force its way out — *haschamayim*. The other complex — *ha'arets* — consists of an inner activity, a permeation with inward craving; it is something which inwardly vivifies, animates. Then we are told of certain qualities of this inner, vivifying, self-stimulating element, and these are indicated in the Bible by appropriate sounds. We are told that this self-stimulating element was in a state which is designated as *tohu wabohu* [1] — *without form and void*. To understand what is meant by *tohu wabohu* we must try to recapture a picture of what it expresses; and we only succeed in doing that if out of our spiritual scientific knowledge we call to mind what it was that, after its passage through the

Saturn, Sun and Moon evolutions, emerged again and surged through space as our planetary earth existence.

I pointed out yesterday that what we call solidity, the state which offers a certain resistance to our senses, did not exist during the Saturn, Sun and Moon evolutions; only the elements of fire or warmth, gas or air, and water were to be found there. It was only with the emergence of the earth that the solid element was added. Thus at the moment when there happened what we were describing yesterday, when the tendency began for the sun to split off from the earth, there is a mutual interpenetration of the elements warmth, air and water — they surged through one another. That preliminary surging interpenetration which we have tried to picture to ourselves is the meaning of the phrase inadequately translated as *without form and void*, but eloquently and effectively rendered by the succession of sounds *tohu wabohu*. What then does *tohu wabohu* signify?

If we try to picture what can be aroused in our souls by these sounds it is something like this. The

sound which resembles our own T calls up a picture of forces diverging from a central point in every direction. Thus the moment one utters the T sound one gets the picture of forces diverging from a centre in every direction to illimitable distances. So that we have to imagine the elements warmth, air and water permeating, interpenetrating each other, and within them a tendency to diverge, as from a centre in all directions. The sound *tohu* alone would suffice to express this tendency to push outwards, to separate. What then does the second part of the phrase signify? It expresses the very opposite of what I have just described. The character of the sound resembling our B, called forth by the letter *Bet*, expresses what you would get if you imagined an enormous sphere, a hollow sphere, with yourself inside it, and rays proceeding from every point inside this sphere towards its centre. Thus you imagine a point within space whence forces stream out in all directions — that is *tohu*; these forces are arrested at the extremities of the spherical enclosure, and turned back again on themselves from every direction of space — that is *bohu*. And if you have formed this idea, and

think of all these streams of force as filled with the three elementary substances of warmth, air and water, then you know the character of this inner animation. The combination of these sounds indicates the way in which elementary existence is guided by the Elohim.

How far has this brought us? We shall not understand the sublime process of the seven days of creation unless we bear these details in mind. If we do so, then the whole will seem a wonderful cosmic drama. Let us recall once more that in the word *bara* — “in the beginning the Gods *created*” — we are concerned with a soul-spiritual activity. I have likened it to the thoughts which are called up in our own souls. Thus we may think of the Elohim as arrayed in space, and *bara* as a cosmic soul-activity, a pondering. What the Elohim ponder is expressed by *haschamayim* and *ha'arets* — the outward radiation and the inner, mobile energy.

To make the comparison as close as possible picture yourselves in the moment of awakening; groups of ideas arise in your souls. This is how

haschamayim and *ha'arets* arise in the souls of the Elohim. Now you know that these Elohim came over to earth evolution at the stage to which they had evolved during the Saturn, Sun and Moon evolutions. So that they are in a somewhat similar situation to your own when on awakening you call up thoughts in your souls. You can contemplate those thoughts, you can say what they are. You can say: "When I awake in the morning and recall what has previously been left in my mind, I can describe it." It was something the same with the Elohim, when they said to themselves: "Let us now reflect upon what arises in our souls when we recall what took place during the ancient Saturn, Sun and Moon evolutions. Let us see how it looks in recollection." What it looked like is expressed in the phrase *tohu wabohu*; it could be expressed by a picture such as I have given you, as streams radiating from a centre outwards into space and back again, in such a way that the elements are interwoven in this streaming of forces. Thus the Elohim could say to themselves: "At the stage to which you have so far brought things this is what they look like. This is how they are resumed."

Now in order to understand what comes next, usually rendered “darkness was above the fluid substances” or “above the waters”(above the abyss) — or *darkness was upon the face of the waters* (English A.V.) — we must take into consideration something else. We must once more turn our attention to the course of evolution before the earth came into existence.

First we have the Saturn existence, inweaving in the fiery element. Then comes the Sun existence, with its addition of the airy element. But in my *Occult Science* you can read how with the addition of the air something else is associated. The fine warmth element of Saturn condenses to a gaseous element. But every such densification is accompanied by a counter-process of refinement. Condensation to the gaseous element is a descending process, but on the other side there is an ascent to the light element. Thus, speaking of the transition from Saturn to Sun, we must say that Saturn still weaves solely in the element of warmth, whereas during the Sun evolution something denser, the gaseous element, is added,

but so also is light. The light element makes it possible for the warmth and the air to manifest themselves in outward radiance.

Now let us take one of the two complexes — the one expressed as *ha'arets*, usually translated as “earth” — and ask ourselves how the Elohim, turning their attention to this complex after their act of recollection, would have described it. They could not have said that what had already existed in the Sun evolution had now come to life again. For it was without light; light had separated from it. *Ha'arets* had thus become one-sided. It had not brought with it the light, but only the coarser elements, the gaseous and the warmth elements. True, there was no lack of light in what is expressed by *haschamayim*, but *haschamayim* is the sunlike, issuing from the other complex. In *ha'arets* there was no rarefaction, there was no light. We may then say that in one of the complexes warmth, air and water surged through one another in the way which is indicated by *tohu wabohu*. These elements were denuded, they lacked the light which had entered into evolution

on the Sun. They remained dark, had nothing sunlike about them; for that had withdrawn with *haschamayim*. Thus the progress of earth evolution means that the light, which it still had so long as the sun remained united with it, had now withdrawn; and a dark fabric woven of the elements of warmth, air and water was left.

We now have the content of the meditation of the Elohim before our souls in more detail. But we shall never be able to think of it in the right way unless we are conscious all the time that air, water and even warmth are external expressions of spiritual Beings. It would not be quite correct to call this elemental existence their “garment”; it should rather be regarded as making known their presence externally. Thus what we call air, water, warmth, are *maya*, illusion; they are only there for the outward aspect, and this is so even for the mind's eye. In reality this elemental existence is something psycho-spiritual, it is the external manifestation of the soul-spiritual of the Elohim. But we must not think of the Elohim as at all like man, for man is actually their goal. To fashion

man, to call man, with his own peculiar organisation, into existence, that is the very matter of their cogitation. So we must not think of them as human, but we must certainly envisage that there is already in their nature a certain cleavage. When we speak of man today, we do not understand him at all unless we distinguish between body, soul and spirit. You know what great efforts we Anthroposophists have made to get a closer understanding of the activity and nature of this human trinity. To recognise this unity in trinity first becomes necessary in the case of man; and it would be a great mistake to think of Beings who existed before man, the Beings whom the Bible calls Elohim, as if they resembled man. Nevertheless in their case too we can rightly distinguish between a kind of body and a kind of spirit.

Now when you distinguish between body and spirit in man, you are well aware that even his outer form bears testimony to the fact that his being lives in it in a variety of ways. For instance, we do not try to locate man's mind in his hand or

his legs, but we say that his bodily functions are in his trunk and his limbs, and that the organ of his mind is the head, the brain; the brain is the instrument of mind. Thus we distinguish in the external human form certain parts as the expression of the physical, and certain other parts as the expression of the spiritual.

We have to look upon the Elohim in somewhat the same way. *All* this surging elementary web of which I have spoken can only be correctly understood if it is looked upon as the bodily vehicle of the Elohim's psycho-spiritual. These elements of air, warmth and water are the external embodiment of the Elohim. But we have to make a further distinction; we have to look upon the watery and gaseous elements as more connected with the bodily, denser functions of the Elohim, and what permeates this *tohu wabohu* as warmth as being the element in which their spiritual part is at work. Just as in the case of man we say that the more bodily part functions in the trunk and the limbs, and the more spiritual part in the head, so if we look upon the entire cosmos as an embodiment

of the Elohim, we can say that their more specifically bodily part lived in the air and the water, and their spiritual part moved in the warmth.

Now the Bible makes use of a remarkable phrase to express the relationship of this spiritual part of the Elohim to the elements: *Ruach Elohim m'rachephet* [2] — a phrase which we must go into more closely if we would understand how the spirit of the Elohim permeated the other elements. We can only understand the verb *racheph* by praying in aid, so to speak, all the associations which it would have carried with it in those days. If one simply says “And the spirit of the Gods moved upon the outspread substances — upon the waters” one has said almost nothing. We can only understand the word if we think of a hen sitting upon her eggs, and of her brooding warmth radiating out over the eggs beneath her. (I know it is a crude illustration, but it does help to bring out the meaning.) And if you think of the energy of this brooding warmth which streams from the hen into the eggs in order to bring the eggs to maturity,

then you can have a notion of the meaning of the verb used here to convey what the spirit does in the element of warmth. It would of course be quite inaccurate to say that the spirit of the Elohim *broods*, because what the physical activity of brooding conveys today is not what is meant. What is meant to be conveyed is the activity of the outraying warmth. As warmth radiates from the hen, so the spirit of the Elohim radiates by means of the warmth element into the other elementary states. When you think of this, you have a picture of what is meant by the words: *And the spirit of God (the Elohim) moved upon the face of the waters.*

Now, up to a point, we have reconstructed the picture which hovered before the soul of the ancient Hebrew sage when he thought about this primeval condition. We have constructed a complex of spherically interwoven warmth, air, water, such as I have described the *tohu wabohu* to be, from which all the light had withdrawn with the *haschamayim*, and this interweaving of the three elementary states was inwardly permeated

with darkness. In the one element, the warmth, there weaves or surges the spirituality of the Elohim, which itself expands with the expanding warmth, and brings to maturity what is at first immature in the darker elements.

Thus when we come to the sentence *And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters*, we are dwelling on one characteristic of what in the first verse of the Bible is called *ha'arets* — earth. We are expressing what is left after *haschamayim* has been withdrawn.

Now let us recall once more the earlier conditions. From the earth we can look back to the Moon, Sun and Saturn conditions. Let us go back to the Sun. We know that at that time there was no separation of what we today call earth from the sun. Therefore the earthly part was not illumined by light from without. That its light comes from without is the essential characteristic of life on earth. At that time, however, you have to think of the earth-sphere as enclosed within the Sun, forming part of the Sun, not receiving light, but itself forming part of the Being that is radiating

light into space. This condition can be summed up by saying simply that in it the earth element does not receive light, but is itself a source of light.

Mark the difference! In the Sun evolution the earth itself participated in the radiation of light. In the earth evolution that is no longer the case. The earth has surrendered the radiant element, it has to receive light from without; light has to stream into it. That is the essential difference between the earth, as it has become in the course of evolution, and the Sun condition; with the separation of the sun, of the *haschamayim*, the light went out too. All that is now outside the earth. The elementary existence which surges in *ha'arets* as *tohu wabohu* has no light of its own. *The Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters*, but that did not make the earth light; it left it in darkness.

Let us take another look at this elementary existence as a whole. You know of course from earlier lectures that we are accustomed to enumerate what we call the elementary states within our earth existence, beginning with the solid, then coming to the watery, next to the

gaseous or aeriform and then to the warmth. These four constitute the denser conditions of matter. But we have not yet finished. If we go further upwards we meet with finer conditions, of which we do not get a much better idea by calling them finer substances. The main thing is to recognise them as finer relatively to the denser ones, the gaseous, the warmth and so on. They are usually called etheric states, and we have always distinguished light as the first of these finer states. Thus, when we descend from warmth into the denser, we come to the gaseous condition; if we ascend, we come to light. Ascending still further, beyond the light we come to a yet finer etheric condition, we come to something which is not really recognisable in the ordinary sense-world. We only get a kind of external reflection of it. From the occult point of view one can say that the forces in this finer ether are those which govern the chemical affinities of matter, the chemical combinations, the organisation of substances such as we can observe if, for instance, we place a fine powder on a metal plate, and then draw the bow of a violin across the plate, getting as a result the “Chladni” sound-

figures. What the coarse physical tone brings about in the powder also occurs throughout space. Space is differentiated, is permeated, by forces which are more rarefied than the forces of light, by forces which represent in the spiritual what tone is in the sense-world. So that when we ascend from warmth to light, and from light to this finer element, we can speak of a chemical of sound-ether, which has the power to decompose and to combine substances, but is in reality of the nature of sound, sound of which the sense-perceptible tone which the ear hears is only the outward expression, the expression made by its passage through air. That brings us somewhat nearer to this finer element which is above light. Thus when we say that what has the quality of manifesting itself externally withdrew from the *ha'arets* with the *haschamayim* we must not think only of the light, but also of the finer etheric element of sound which permeates light.

Just as we go downward from warmth to air, and thence to water, so we can go upward from warmth to light, and from light to what is of the

nature of sound, of chemical combination. And from water we can descend lower to earth. When we mount from the sound-ether we come to a still higher etheric condition, which also withdrew with the *haschamayim*. We come to the finest etheric state of all, which weaves within the chemical or sound-ether we have just been describing. If you turn your spiritual ear in this direction, you do not of course hear a noise in the external air, but you hear the tone which vibrates through space, the tone which permeates space and organises matter just as the tone produced by the bow of a violin organises the Chladni sound-figures. But into this condition brought about by the sound-ether is poured a still higher etheric mode. And this higher ether permeates the sound-ether just as the meaning of our thought permeates the sound which our mouth utters, thereby transforming tone into word. Try to comprehend what it is that transforms tone into a word full of meaning; then you will have some idea of this finer etheric element permeating the organising sound-ether and giving meaning to it — the *Word* which vibrates through space. And this Word, which

thrills through space and pours itself out into the sound-ether, is at the same time the source of life, it is really vibrant, weaving life! Thus what has withdrawn out of the *ha'arets* with the *haschamayim*, what has gone into the sun, as distinct from the other, the lower, the earth part — as distinct from the *tohu wabohu* — announces itself externally as light. But behind the light is spiritual tone, and behind that is cosmic speech. Thus we may say that in the brooding warmth lives the lower spiritual part of the Elohim, somewhat as our own desire lives in the lower part of our soul. The higher spirituality of the Elohim, which went out with the *haschamayim*, lives in the light, in the spiritual sound, in the spiritual word, the cosmic Word. These can only stream into the *tohu wabohu* again from without.

Let us now try to bring before us in a picture what hovered before the soul of the Hebrew sage as *ha'arets*, as *haschamayim*. When what withdrew as spiritual light, as sound, as the uttering and formative Word-element, streams back again, how does it act? It works from the sun as articulate

light, as light giving utterance to cosmic speech. Let us think of what we have called *tohu wabohu* in its darkness, in its surging interweaving of warmth, air and water; let us think of it in its light-forsaken darkness. And then let us think that out of the activity of the Elohim, through the creative Word, which as the highest etheric entity lies behind their activity, there rays in with the light all that streams out from the Word. How is one to describe what is taking place? One cannot more fittingly express it than by saying that the Beings who had withdrawn their highest into the etheric with *haschamayim* radiated answering light out of cosmic space into the *tohu wabohu*. There you have the substance of the memorable verse: *And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.* There you have the picture which hovered before the Hebrew sage.

So we must think of the Beings of the Elohim as spread over the whole cosmos, we must think of this whole cosmos as their body, and the elementary existence in the *tohu wabohu* as the lowest form of this body; of the warmth as a

somewhat higher form; and we must think of the *haschamayim*, the part which has withdrawn, as the highest spirituality, which now works creatively into the whole structure of the *tohu wabohu*.

Now you see what I am leading up to — that it was the cosmic Word expressing radiant light which organised the surging of the elementary part, the *tohu wabohu*, and made it what it later became. Whence comes the power which organises the human form? There can be no human form such as we have, standing upright on two legs, making use of hands, unless it be organised by forces emanating from the brain. Our own form is organised by the highest spiritual forces streaming out from our own spiritual part. The lower is always organised by the higher. In the same way the *ha'arets*, the body of the Elohim, their lower part, was organised by their higher bodily part, the *haschamayim*, and by the spiritual essence of the Elohim working within it. Thus the highest spirituality of the Elohim takes possession of what has been cast out, and organises it, and we

can express this by saying that the light manifesting itself through the cosmic Word streams into the darkness. That is how the *tohu wabohu* was organised, raised out of the disorder of the elements. Thus, if you think of the *haschamayim* as the head of the Elohim, and the elementary part which is left behind as the trunk and limbs, organised through the power of the head, then you have the actual process. Then you have man expanded to cover the whole cosmos. And out of the spiritual organs in *haschamayim* he organises himself. When we think of all the streams of energy which pour out from the *haschamayim* to the *ha'arets* we may venture to picture it as a macrocosmic man organising himself.

Now in order to paint the picture more accurately, let us turn our attention to man as he is today. Let us ask ourselves how man has become what he is — I mean, what he is to the spiritual scientist, not to ordinary science. What is it that has given him the special structure which distinguishes him from all the rest of the living creatures around him?

What is it which weaves throughout this human form? If one does not blind oneself it is very easy to say what makes him man; it is something he possesses which none of the beings around him has — speech, which expresses itself in its own proper sounds. That is what makes him man. Think of the form of the animal and ask yourselves how it could be raised to the level of the human form. What would have to permeate it for it to become human? Let us put the question in this way. Let us think of an animal form, and imagine that we have to make a breath enter into it — what would this breath have to contain, in order to make this form begin to speak? It would have to feel itself inwardly organised in such a way that it uttered the sounds of speech. It is the sounds of speech which make the animal structure human!

How then can one picture the cosmos? Out of all that I have put before your souls, all that I have built up gradually out of this elementary existence, picture by picture, how can one come to feel the cosmos inwardly, how can one come inwardly to feel the structure of macrocosmic man? By

beginning to feel how the sounds of speech flash into form.

When the sound of A soughs through the air, learn to feel not merely its tone, learn to feel the form it makes, just as the tone of the violin bow, passed over the edge of a plate, makes a form in the powder. Learn to feel the A and the B in their transience through space; learn to experience them not merely as sound, but as form-making; then you will feel as the Hebrew sage felt when the sounds of speech stimulated in him the pictures which I have put before your mind's eye. That was the effect of the sounds of speech. That is why I had to say that *Bet* (B) aroused the idea of something enclosing, like a shell shutting something off and enclosing an inner content. *Resch* (R) stimulated a feeling such as one has when one feels one's head: and *Schin* (S) suggested what I might describe as a pricking or penetrating. That is a thoroughly objective language, a language which, if the soul is receptive, crystallises into pictures as the sounds are uttered. In the sounds themselves lies the lofty discipline which led the sage to the pictures which

crowd upon the soul of the seer when he enters into the supersensible world. Sound is in this way transmuted into spiritual form, and conjures before the soul pictures which form a connected whole in the way I have described. What is so remarkable about this ancient record is that it has been preserved in a language the sounds of which create form, the sounds of which crystallise in the soul into form. And these forms are the very pictures which one gets when one penetrates to the supersensible out of which our material physical has evolved. When one comes to understand this, one feels a deep awe and reverence for the way in which the world has evolved; and one comes to realise that truly it is by no mere chance that this great document of human existence has been transmitted in this script — a script which by means of its very characters is capable of arousing pictures in the soul, and of guiding us to what in our own time the seer is to discover anew. That is the feeling which the Anthroposophist ought to cultivate when he approaches this ancient document.

Notes:

[1]

תהו ובהו

Diagram 3

[2]

רוח אלהים מרחפת

Diagram 4

LECTURE III

LAST time we sketched out a mental picture of the moment indicated by those meaningful words of the Bible: *And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.* They allude to an event which we can see as the recapitulation at a higher level of an earlier stage of evolution. I must keep on using the illustration of the man who on awakening calls up in his mind a certain content; it is in some such way that what had slowly and gradually been built up during the course of the Saturn, Sun and Moon evolutions springs to life again from the soul of the Elohim in a new form, a modified form. In fact all that is narrated in the Bible of the six or seven “days” of creation is a reawakening of previous conditions, not in the same but in a new form.

The next question which we have to ask ourselves is this — what kind of reality are we to attribute to

the account of what happened in the course of these six or seven “days?” It will be clearer if we put the question in this way. Could an ordinary eye, in fact could any organs of sense such as we have today have followed what we are told took place during the six days of creation? No, they could not. For the events there described really took place in the sphere of elementary existence, so that a certain degree of clairvoyant knowledge, clairvoyant perception, would have been needed for their observation. The truth is that the Bible tells us of the origin of the sensible out of the supersensible, and that the events with which it opens are supersensible events, even if they are only one stage higher than the ordinary physical events which proceeded from them and are familiar to us. In all our descriptions of the six days' work of creation we are in the domain of clairvoyant perception. What had existed at an earlier time now came forth in etheric, in elementary form. We must get a firm grasp of that, otherwise we shall be all at sea over the true meaning of the impressive words of Genesis. Thus we must expect to see all that had gradually

evolved during the Saturn, Sun and Moon evolutions emerging in a new form.

Let us begin by asking ourselves what were the special characteristics of each of these three planetary forms? On Saturn everything was in a kind of mineral condition — you can read about it in my *Occult Science*. What was there as the first rudiment of man, which really constituted the whole substance of Saturn, was in a kind of mineral form. But in saying this we must not think of the mineral of today, for Saturn had nothing in it either of liquid or of solid; Saturn was nothing but interweaving warmth. But the laws which prevailed in this planet of warmth, and which brought about and organised the complicated differentiations within it, were the very same laws which obtain today in the solid mineral kingdom. So that when we say that both Saturn and man himself were in a “mineral” condition we must remember that it was not the mineral of today, but a state of inweaving warmth governed by mineral laws.

Then comes the Sun condition of the planet. Here we must never forget that there was as yet no separation of the part which later became the earth. What today has become sun and earth was then a common body, a *single* cosmic body. In contrast to the earlier Saturn, a denser, gaseous element developed in the Sun, so that in addition to the interweaving warmth we have a transfluent gaseous or airy element, setting hither and thither in accordance with its own laws. But at the same time we have a new formation in the ascending mode, a kind of rarefaction of warmth towards the luminous, a radiation of light into space. Our planetary evolution, as I have called it, advanced during the Sun period to the stage of the plant. Again we must not imagine that there were plants on the old Sun in their present form; it is only that the same laws were at work there in the elements of warmth and air as rule in the plant kingdom today, those laws which determine that the root shall grow downward and the blossom upward. Obviously there could be no solid plants; one must think of the forces which send blossoms up and roots down, weaving in an airy structure, so that

the Sun flashes forth blossoms of light in an upward direction. Imagine a gaseous sphere, and within it weaving and sprouting light, living light, which causes the gaseous vapour to shoot and sparkle in radiant blossoms, while at the same time below there is an effort to check these luminous outbursts, an effort to make the Sun cohere round its centre. Then you have the inweaving of light, warmth and air in the ancient Sun evolution. The laws of the mineral kingdom are repeated and the laws of the plant world are added, and so much of man as is already there has itself only reached a plantlike condition.

Where today should we find anything in the least comparable to that plantlike weaving in the air-warmth-light sphere of the Sun? With the senses of today we should search the whole of cosmic space in vain. At a certain period of the Sun evolution these conditions did obtain, even physically — that is to say, physically to the density of air. Today they cannot exist physically at all. The form of activity which at that time actually existed in the physical mode can only be found today by

directing a faculty of clairvoyant perception towards that region of the supersensible world where are the spiritual Beings who lie behind our external physical plants, those Beings whom we have learnt to know as the group-souls of the plants. Today they can only be found by clairvoyant consciousness in spiritual realms. The group-souls of the plants do not subsist in individual plants, such as we see growing out of the soil, but there is one group-soul for each species of plant, such as the rose, the violet, the oak, and so on. For the poverty-stricken, abstract thinking of today, plant species are just abstractions, notions. They were already so in the Middle Ages; and it was because at that time men no longer knew anything of what weaves and activates in the spiritual as the basis of the physical, that there arose the well-known conflict between realism and nominalism — the dispute as to whether species were merely names, or whether they were real spiritual entities. For clairvoyant consciousness there is no sense whatever in this dispute, for when it directs its attention towards the plant-covering of our earth, it pierces through

the outer forms to the spirit region where the group-souls of the plants actually live as real Beings. And these group-souls are one and the same reality as what we call species. At the time when the air, warmth and light sphere of the Sun was in its full splendour, when light, playing in the surface of the airy globe, threw off the sparkling blossoms of plant existence, these physically gaseous forms were actually the same as the plant species which can still be found today, though only in spiritual realms. Let us hold firmly in mind, then, that the plant “species” which cover our earth today with foliage and blossom, with trees and shrubs, pervaded the Sun actually *as* group-souls or species.

So far as man had evolved at that time, he too was to be found in a plantlike condition. He was unable to awaken mental images within himself, unable to awaken in consciousness what went on around him, any more than the plants today can do so. Man was himself living a plant existence, and his bodily form was among those light forms in continuous play in the gaseous globe. The

emergence in the cosmos of even the most primitive forms of consciousness involves very special concomitant conditions. So long as our terrestrial substance was still united with the solar substance, so long as the sunlight did not fall upon the terrestrial globe from without, nothing of what we term consciousness could develop in it; nor could an astral body, which is the basis of consciousness, penetrate the physical and etheric bodies. For consciousness to arise, a separation or fission had to take place, something had to be split off from the Sun. And that happened during the third stage of our earth's evolution, during the Moon epoch. After the Sun condition came to an end, and had passed through a kind of cosmic night, the whole formation appeared again; but now it had become sufficiently mature to manifest as a duality, sufficiently mature for all the Sun elements in it to withdraw into a separate cosmic body, leaving behind the Moon, upon which the elementary conditions of only water, air and warmth were to be found. The Moon was the earth of that time, and it was only because the beings living upon it could receive the forces of the sun

from without that they could take into themselves astral bodies and so develop consciousness, reflect in inner experience what went on around them. An animal nature, an inwardly living animal nature, a nature capable of consciousness, is dependent for its existence upon separation between sun and earth elements. The animal nature first appeared during the Moon evolution, and man himself — the body of man — was then developed to the animal stage. You will find this more closely described in my *Occult Science*. Thus we see that the three epochs which precede that of our own earth, and condition it, are linked together by certain laws.

And on the Moon a fluid element is added to the gaseous — a watery element on the one hand, and an element of sound on the other, such as I described yesterday when speaking of the rarefaction of light. That is a very summary account of the course of evolution.

Now what had taken place during these three epochs emerged again in the recollection of the Elohim — at first, as I said yesterday, in a state of

confusion which is described in the Bible by the words *tohu wabohu*. The stream of forces which moved from the centre to the periphery and from the periphery back again to the centre at first embraced the interactivity of all three elementary conditions — air, warmth and water. These three elements were now undifferentiated, though previously the gaseous and the warmth elements on the Sun, and the three forms, warmth, gas and water, on the Moon, had been distinct from one another. Now, during the *tohu wabohu*, they were all in motley confusion, gushing into and out of one another, so that in the early stages of earth development it was impossible to distinguish between what was watery, what was gaseous, what was warmth. They were all mixed up.

The first thing which then happened was that the element of light broke into all this; and out of the psychic or spiritual activity which I have described as cosmic musing there then came to pass a separation of gaseous from fluid. I will ask you to hold very clearly in your minds this moment which followed the coming into being of light. In

dry prose, what happened was this: after the light had penetrated into the *tohu wabohu*, the Elohim caused what had once before in the past been the gaseous element to separate from what in the same way had been the watery element, so that it was again possible to differentiate between the gaseous and the watery. Thus in the chaotic mass compounded of the three elementary states, a separation came about, but in such a way that elements of *two* different natures emerged — one of the nature of air, with a tendency to expand in all directions, the other of the nature of water, with the tendency to cohere. But the two were not yet in a condition comparable to the air or water of today. The “water” was very much denser — we shall presently see why this was so. On the other hand, to get an idea of the constitution of “air” at that time, we cannot do better than look up from the earth to where, in the region of air, the water turns to vaporous formations, and has the tendency to rise into clouds, only to fall again later as rain. Thus the one element was an ascending, the other a descending one. There was a quality of water in both of them, but the one kind of water had the

tendency to become vaporous, to rise upward as cloud, and the other the tendency to pour downward and assume a level surface. Of course, that is only a comparison, for what I have been describing took place in the elementary world.

Through their cosmic musing the Elohim brought it about that a separation took place in the *tohu wabohu* between two elementary conditions. The one had the tendency to press upward, to become vapour; that is, the watery transforming itself to the gaseous; the other had the tendency to discharge itself downward; that is, the watery condensing and cohering. That is the course of events which is expressed in modern languages in words somewhat like this: “The Gods made a something between the waters above and the waters below.” I have just described to you what the Elohim did. Within the “waters” they brought it about that one element had the tendency to spread outwards, to expand, the other to contract towards a centre. The something between is nothing tangible, it is just a way of saying that a separation has been brought about between the

two forms of energy which I have just described. You could also put it this way, that the Elohim so acted on the waters that on the one side they took an upward direction, showed a tendency to cloud-formation, a tendency to stream out into space; on the other side they showed a tendency to accumulate upon the surface of the earth. The “partition” was really more like a notional one, and the word in Genesis which expresses this process of separation must be so understood. You know that the Vulgate uses the word “firmament” [1] for this. The Hebrew word is *rakia*. [2] This word means something which should not be interpreted in a phenomenal sense — it simply means the separation of two directions of force.

With that we have reached what is described in Genesis as the second “day”; and if we want to put it into our own words, we should have to say, “within the vortex of elementary states the Elohim first separated the airy from the fluid nature.” That is a quite exact rendering of what is meant; the Elohim separated what tends to become air, which of course includes watery vapour, from what tends

to contract and become denser. That is the second “day” of creation.

We go on to the next “day”! What happens now? What has been sent outwards, what radiates out and tends to form clouds, has reached a stage which in a certain way is a recapitulation of an earlier condition; it is a repetition in a denser form of what took place on the Sun. That which has a tendency to contract, which in a way repeats the condensation to water on the Moon, is now further differentiated, and this further separation constitutes what comes to pass on the third “day” of creation. We may say that on the second “day” the Elohim separated the airy from the watery. In the same way on the third “day” they separate, within the watery element, what we today know as water, from something which had not been there before, something which was a further densification — the solid element. It is only now that the solid comes into existence. During the Moon evolution this solid, earth element was not in existence. Now it is precipitated out of the watery element. Thus on the third “day” of

creation we have a process of condensation, and we have to say that, as the Elohim on the second “day” separated out the airy element from the watery, so now on the third “day” within what was in effect the Moon-substance, they separate off a new watery element from the earth element, which now emerges as something completely new. Everything which I have hitherto described had already existed before, though in another form. The first thing which is entirely new is the earth element, the solid, which appears now on the third “day.” This earth element, separated out from the water, this is the new arrival. But this also makes it possible for what was already there to assume a new form.

What is it which now first begins to form? It is something which had already taken shape on the Sun, it is what we have described as the sprouting plant nature in the tenuous airy element of the Sun — which had then reappeared on the Moon in the watery element — though of course there were still no plants in the sense of today. And it is only on the third “day” that there is a recapitulation of

this in the earth element. What is first repeated in the earth element as the plant nature is wonderfully described in the Bible. I will deal later with the question of how we should understand the “day” of creation; for the moment I am concerned with the irruption of light and of air from without, of the separation of water from solid. The solid now brings forth a recapitulation of the plant nature out of itself. That is very clearly described in the Bible, when it says that after the Elohim had separated the earth from the water, the plant life springs forth from the earth. Thus the sprouting of plant life on the third “day” of creation is a recapitulation in the solid element of what had already existed during the Sun evolution; it is as it were a cosmic memory. In the cosmic musing of the Elohim there arose the plant life which had been present on the Sun in gaseous form, but which emerges now in the solid state.

Everything repeats itself in a new form. The plant life is still in a state which is not individualised as on our earth today. I have expressly called attention to the fact that separate plants such as we

see around us in the sense-world today were not to be found on the Sun, nor on the Moon, nor even on the earth at the moment when the plant nature emerges again in the earth element. What were there were the group-souls of the plants, what we today call the species, which to clairvoyant consciousness were no abstractions, but something actually present in the spirit realm. At that time there was a re-emergence in a supersensible realm of what we call plant species. And that is what the Bible says. It is strange how little Biblical commentators are able to make of the words *And the earth brought forth grass and herb yielding seed after his kind*. One ought to say, instead of *after his kind*, “in the mode of species.” What it means is that the plant nature was there in the form of group-souls, in the form of species; there were no individual plants such as there are today. You will not understand the description of the springing-up of plant life on the third “day” of creation unless you think of the group-soul nature. You must clearly understand that no plants, as we understand the term today, sprang up at that time, but that out of a psychic activity, out of a cosmic,

musings activity, sprouted species, in other words the group-souls of the plant kingdom.

Thus, when on the third “day” of creation we are told that the Elohim separated out from the fluid the solid, the fourth elementary condition, we find that in this “solid” state — which of course in its original elementary form would not yet have been visible to an external eye, but only to clairvoyant sight — there was a reappearance of the forms of the plant species.

This was not yet possible as regards the animal nature. We have already described how the animal nature made its first appearance during the Moon evolution, after a duality had come into being, after the sun had begun to operate from without. Hence a repetition of this event (the separation of the moon) had to take place before evolution could advance from the plant to the animal nature. Therefore after the third “day” it is pointed out how in the environment of the earth the sun, moon and stars now come into activity; how there begins to take effect something which radiates from without, which sends in its forces from without.

Whereas hitherto we have seen the effect of a sprouting activity within the planet itself, now, in addition to this, we see something which comes from the heavenly spaces, radiating inwards. In other words, in addition to the forces of the earth itself, which could only recapitulate what it had produced as a unitary body at an earlier stage, the Elohim in their cosmic musing brought into action the forces which streamed down upon the planet from outer space. Cosmic existence was added to earthly existence. To begin with, let us see nothing but this in what is described as taking place on the fourth “day.” What was the result of this irradiation from without? It enabled processes to be recapitulated — though in a different form — which were already to be found in the Moon evolution. During the Moon evolution there had developed as much of an animal nature as could live in the elements of air and water. It was only now that this could reappear. Therefore Genesis tells us, in wonderful accord with the facts, how on the fifth “day” of creation the teeming multitude in air and water comes into existence. It describes a recapitulation of the Moon epoch, now

in a new form, at a higher level, in the earth element.

My dear friends, at the contemplation of such things this ancient record fills us with awe; it is wholly in the spirit of our anthroposophical outlook that we are able to feel the deepest reverence for it. What is experienced by clairvoyant consciousness is recorded in this document in impressive words, in words full of power; we find there again what we already know — that after the irradiation from without had taken place, a recapitulation became possible of what had existed in the airy and the watery elements of the Moon evolution. In the light of such a soul-stirring discovery how can we attach any importance to intellectual criticisms of these things? What nonsense it makes of the argument that this document was written in primitive times, when human knowledge was still at a very childish level! A fine “childish level,” when we rediscover in it the highest knowledge to which we can raise ourselves! Must we not ascribe to those who have handed down to us this ancient record the same

spirituality which alone today enables us to rise to this revelation? Does not this document, bequeathed to us by those ancient seers, bear witness for them? The content of this record itself testifies that its writers were inspired. Truly we need no historical proof, the words furnish their own proof.

When we understand the matter in this way we realise that it was only after the fifth “day” of creation that anything new could happen. For all the necessary recapitulation had now taken place. Now the earth itself, which had emerged as a new element, could be populated with animal life, and with whatever might develop as new formation. Hence we find described in impressive detail how creatures appeared on the sixth “day” whose existence was bound up with the new element of earth. Up to the fifth “day” we have a recapitulation at a higher stage in a new form of what had gone before, but on the sixth “day” the earth-nature comes into its own for the first time, and something is added which has only been made possible by the earth conditions.

I have now given you an outline of the six “days” of creation. I have shown you how those who shrouded their deep wisdom in this narrative must have been fully conscious of what was emerging as new. Further, they must have been fully aware that it was only within this earth element that what constituted the very core of man's being could enter in. We know that all that man went through during the Saturn, Sun and Moon evolutions amounted to preparatory stages for the real human incarnation. We know that during the Saturn period the first rudiments of a physical body had been laid down in man; during the Sun evolution the rudiments of an etheric or life body were added; during the Moon evolution the rudiments of an astral body. What was recapitulated up to the end of the fifth day contained an element of astrality. Everything which has being has astrality. To infuse the ego, the fourth member of human nature, into a being in this whole evolutionary complex was not possible until the conditions for the earth had been fully created. So the Elohim prepared the earth by recapitulating the earlier stages at a higher level throughout the five “days”

of creation. It was only then, only because the recapitulation had taken a new form, that they had at their disposal a fit vessel, a vessel into which they could impress the human form; and that was the consummation of the whole of evolution.

Had a mere repetition taken place, evolution as a whole would only have been able to advance to the animal, to the astral stage. But because all the time, from the beginning and throughout the periods of recapitulation, something was being infused into evolution which finally revealed itself as earth, at last there came something into which the Elohim could pour all that was in them. I have already described how it lived in them — it was just as if there were seven men in a group, each one of whom has learnt something different, each of whom has a different capacity, but all of whom are working towards a common end. They all wish to make one and the same thing. Each has to contribute what best he can. Thereby a work in common arises. No single individual has the skill to produce this object alone, but together they are able to achieve it. We could say that their product

bears the impress of the joint idea they had formed of their work. We must bear in mind throughout this special characteristic of the seven Elohim, that they all worked together in order to bring about at last their crowning achievement — in order at last to pour human form into what had been brought about by a recapitulation of earlier conditions, because the whole bore the stamp of something new.

Hence suddenly we begin to hear quite a different language in the Genesis account. Earlier it says “the Elohim created,” or “the Elohim spoke.” There we have the feeling that we are dealing with something already determined. Now, when the consummation of earth existence is about to be achieved, we read: *Let us make man*. That sounds as if the Seven were taking counsel together, as one does when one is trying to bring to fulfilment a work in common. And so, in what emerges as the final consummation of the work of evolution, we have to see a product of the combined effort of all the Elohim; we have to see that they all contribute, each as he is able, to this their work in common,

and that at length the human etheric form appears as an expression of the capacity and skill acquired by the Elohim during the Saturn, Sun and Moon evolutions.

In saying this we have drawn attention to something of immense importance. We have touched on the question of what we may call human worth. In many epochs the impression made upon religious minds by certain words brought their consciousness far nearer to the truth than is the case today. It was so in the case of the Hebrew seer. When he looked up to the seven Elohim, what he experienced obliged him to say to himself, in all humility and reverence, that man must be something mighty in the world, if the differing activities of seven Beings had to combine in order to bring him into existence. The human form on earth is a goal of the Gods! I ask you to feel the immense significance of this statement, and you will say to yourselves that each one of us has a tremendous responsibility for the human form, has an obligation to make it as perfect as possible. Perfection became a possibility from the

moment when the Elohim resolved to bend all their united capacities towards the achievement of the one goal. This divine heritage has been entrusted to man, in order that he may develop it ever higher and higher into far distant times. Our study of cosmic evolution in relation to the tremendous opening words of the Bible must lead us in all humility, but also in strength, to a consciousness of this goal to be achieved. It is our origin that these words unveil. At the same time they point us to our goal, our highest ideal. We feel ourselves to be of divine origin; but we feel too what I tried to show in my Rosicrucian Drama, at the point where the initiate passes a certain stage, and feels himself in the resounding “O Man, experience thyself!” To be sure, he feels his human weakness, but he also feels his divine goal. He is no longer lost, no longer inwardly shrivelled, but on the contrary he feels uplifted; in the moment of experiencing his true Self he feels that he is being *experienced*. When he is able to experience himself in that other Self, something streams through him which is akin to his soul, because it is his own divine destination.

Notes:

[1] So does the English Authorised Version, which reads as follows: *Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters.*

[2]

רָקִיעַ

Diagram 5

LECTURE IV

WE have pointed out that in the Genesis account of the coming into existence of the earth, there is first of all a recapitulation of those earlier stages of evolution which today can only be reached through the clairvoyant investigation which we recognise as the source of our anthroposophical world outlook. If we recall what we have learnt from that source about the conditions of evolution in periods prior to the existence of our earth, we remember that what later became our solar system was contained in a planetary existence which we call Saturn. We must be quite clear that this ancient Saturn consisted solely of interrelationships of warmth. If anyone, from the standpoint of modern physics, raises an objection to my speaking of a cosmic body consisting only of warmth, I must refer him to what I said two

days ago — that I could myself raise all the scientific objections against the things said here today or at any other time. But there is really not time in these lectures to touch on what this gullible modern science has to say. Faced with the sources of spiritual scientific investigation, the whole range of modern scientific knowledge seems pretty amateurish. I do intend one day to deal with many of the objections raised. I shall probably begin next spring at the time of my lecture cycle in Prague; and I shall there speak not only of the whole basis of Anthroposophy, but in order to satisfy contemporary minds, I shall speak also of the arguments against it. My Prague cycle will be preceded by two public lectures, of which the first will be called: How can Anthroposophy be refuted? And the second: How can Anthroposophy be substantiated? [1] Later I shall repeat these lectures at other places, and people will then see that we are fully aware of the objections which can be made against what is taught in Anthroposophy. Anthroposophy has a firm foundation, and those who think they are able to refute it do not yet understand it. Time will show in the long run that

this is so. As to Saturn's state of warmth, let me once more draw attention to certain observations in my book *Occult Science*, which may also help to satisfy those who are prompted by their scientific training to object.

Having said this, I feel free to resume my exposition from the anthroposophical standpoint, without further reference to well-meant objections. In Saturn, then, there was an interweaving of varying conditions of warmth. Let us get hold of that quite clearly. The Genesis account describes a repetition within the developing earth of this ancient Saturn state, these relationships of warmth or fire. That is the first thing in the elementary existence which we have to hold fast to. But mark, please, in what sense we speak of warmth or fire in the case of such a lofty existence as that of the Saturn evolution. We shall not get anywhere near it by striking a match or lighting a candle and examining the warmth of physical existence. We have to think of it as much more spiritual — or perhaps better say more psychic. Feel your way into yourself as a warmth-bearing being — and

this feeling of your own warmth, experience of your own soul-warmth, will give you a proximate idea of that interweaving warmth in Saturn.

Then we pass on to the Sun, the second phase of the evolution of our planet, and speak of how in elementary existence warmth condensed to the gaseous or aeriform. Thus in the elementary existence of the Sun we have to distinguish between warmth and the gaseous or aery. We have already pointed out that together with the condensation of warmth into air — that is to say, with the descent of the elemental consistency in the direction of density — there is a corresponding ascent towards a more rarefied, more etheric condition, so that if we call “air” the elementary condition next below warmth, we must call the condition next above warmth, light, or light-ether. Thus, if we look at elementary conditions as a whole during the Sun evolution, we shall say that in the Sun there is an interpenetration of warmth, light and air, and all life during that time manifested itself within this condition of warmth, light and air. Now we must once more make clear

that if we take into consideration only these elementary manifestations of warmth, light and air, we are only considering the outer aspect — the maya, the illusion — of what is really there. In reality spiritual Beings are announcing themselves externally by means of warmth, light and air. It is somewhat as if we were to stretch out our hand into a heated space and say to ourselves: “Since there is warmth in this space, there must be a Being who disseminates this warmth, and finds thereby means of manifestation.”

When we pass on to the Moon, there again we have warmth as the middle condition, condensing below into air or gas and still further below into water. Light once more makes its appearance above. Then, above the light, we have a finer, more etheric state. I have already said that we may give the name “sound-ether” to what works within substances as an organising principle, causing chemical combinations and chemical analyses; it is something which man can only recognise with his external senses when it is transmitted by the air, but it lies spiritually behind all existence. We

might call it “ringing” or tonic ether. Alternatively, because this spiritual sound organises material existence according to number and weight, we might also call it the ether of numbers. Thus we rise from light to sound, but we do not confuse this sound with the external sound which is carried over the air, but recognise it as something which is only perceptible when the clairvoyant sense is in some way awakened. Thus both in the Moon itself and in what works upon it from without we have to see, in elementary form, warmth, air, water, light and sound. When we reach the fourth condition, and with it the coming into existence of the earth proper, a further stage of condensation and a further stage of rarefaction are added — below, the earthy or solid; above, the life-ether, which is a still finer ether than the sound-ether. So we may describe the elementary existence of the earth in this way. Warmth is again the middle state; as denser conditions we have air, water, solid; as rarer conditions we have light, sound and life ethers. In order to be quite sure that nothing is left vague in this exposition, I will once more state explicitly that what I describe as “earth” or “solid”

must not be confused with what modern science calls earth. What is described here is something which is not directly visible around us. Of course, what we tread upon when we tread the earth's soil is earth, in so far as it is solid; but so are gold, silver, copper and tin, earth. Everything of a solid material nature is earth in the sense of occultism. The modern physicist will of course say that there is nothing in this distinction — that he himself differentiates between our various elements, but that he has no knowledge of any primeval substance lying behind those elements. It is only when the clairvoyant eye penetrates the external elements — some severity of them — and seeks the basis of solidity, when he looks for the forces which organise matter into the solid state, it is only then that he discovers the forces which construct, which build, which combine solid, liquid and gaseous. That is what we are referring to here, and that too is what Genesis is referring to. We shall, then, expect to find that according to Genesis the three earlier conditions are in some way recapitulated in earth existence, but that the fourth state appears as something new.

Let us check the account by the same method that we used in earlier lectures. In the coming into existence of our earth we should expect to find a repetition of the Saturn state. In other words we should expect to find the Saturn warmth working as an expression of a soul-spiritual. And this is what we do find, if we understand the account rightly. I have told you that the words which are usually translated *And the Spirit of God moved upon the face of the waters* really mean that the soul-spiritual of the Elohim expanded and that a warmth element — the kind of warmth we conceive to be rayed down from the hen to the egg in the act of brooding — penetrated the existing elementary condition. In saying “The spirit of the Elohim radiates as a brooding warmth through the elementary existence, or the waters,” you indicate the recapitulation of the Saturn warmth.

The next condition has to be one which represents a recapitulation of the Sun evolution. For the time being let us ignore the condensation process which goes on from warmth to air, and let us turn our attention to the process of rarefaction, to the

element of light. Let us take the fact that during the solar period light penetrates into our cosmic space, and then the recapitulation of the ancient Sun evolution will be the permeation by light of our developing earth. That is announced in the mighty words: *And God said, Let there be light: and there was light.*

The third recapitulation, considered with reference to the finer elementary states, must consist in the fact that the organising, tonic or sound-ether permeates our nascent earth. Let us then ask ourselves whether there is in fact any indication of such a recapitulation of the Moon evolution in the Genesis account. What should we expect to find? We should expect the sound-ether to set to work to organise the elementary substance, rather as the fine powder spread on a plate is organised when we pass across the plate the bow of a violin, and the sound-forms of Chladni appear. There would have to be a recapitulation which would be recorded somewhat like this: “The tonic or sound-ether set to work to organise matter in a certain way.” But what is actually reported about the

moment of creation which followed upon the coming into existence of light? We are told that something was stimulated by the Elohim in the material elementary mass which caused it to radiate in the upward direction and to gather itself together, to contract, in the downward direction, as I described to you yesterday. A force enters into the elementary matter and organises it, just as sound takes hold of the powder and brings about the Chladni figures. Just as the powder is organised, so the elementary mass is organised through the radiation upward of part of it, and the concentration downward of the other part. The word *rakia*, which is used to indicate what the Elohim introduced into the elementary matter, is difficult to translate, and the usual translations are inadequate to render it correctly. Even when one takes into account all that can today be contributed towards its elucidation, including what philology has to say, one is bound to confess that neither the translation “firmament” nor any of its variants takes us very far. For there is an element of activity, of stimulation in this word. And a more precise philology would find that there is

contained in this word what I have just indicated — that the Elohim stimulated something in the elementary matter which may be compared with what is stimulated in the powder of the Chladni sound-figures when sound sets to work to organise it. As the powder is organised in the case of the Chladni sound-figures, so the elementary mass is disposed upward and downward on the second “day” of creation. Thus, in the Genesis account, following the intervention of the light-ether, we see that of the sound-ether, and the second “day” of creation gives us, quite in accordance with the facts, what we must understand as a recapitulation of the Moon evolution.

You will soon see that these recapitulations cannot come about in an entirely straightforward manner, but that they overlap one another. And the apparent contradiction between today's exposition and that of yesterday will soon be explained. The recapitulation takes place in such a way that first there happens what I am now describing, and then there is a more comprehensive recapitulation, such as I described yesterday.

After the moment when the sound-ether has so disposed the substances that some radiate upward, and others accumulate below, we should expect to find that something sets to work as a still finer condition, one which we must call the life-ether. After the second “day” of creation something should happen which would indicate to us that life-ether was streaming into the elementary mass of our earth, just as previously light and organising sound had poured in. There should be some phrase in Genesis to indicate that life-ether thrilled through the mass and caused life to stir, caused life to unfold. Look at the Genesis account of the third “day” of creation. It tells us how the earth causes green things to grow, the living element of tree and herb — as I said yesterday, in the mode of species — *after his kind*. There we have a vivid description of the instreaming of the life-ether, which evokes everything that is said to have come into being on the third day.

Thus in Genesis we find all that clairvoyant investigation can bring to light — which is what we should expect, if it really derives from occult knowledge. It is all there if we know how to interpret it. It is a wonderful experience to find confirmed in Genesis what we have first discovered by independent investigation. I can assure you that in the description I gave in my Occult Science of the coming into existence of the earth as a recapitulation of the Saturn, Sun and Moon evolutions, I quite deliberately and scrupulously ignored anything which could have been learnt from Genesis. I only described what I was able to discover quite independently of that ancient record. But if you then compare these independent findings with the Genesis account, you see that the latter says just what our independent investigation has enabled us to say. That is the remarkable consonance to which I called attention yesterday, when what we can say of our own accord comes sounding back to us from the spiritual faculties of seers who speak to us across thousands of years.

Thus, in the first three “days” of creation, we see as regards the finer elements of the earth's nature a successive activity of warmth, light, sound-ether and life-ether, and in what these activities stimulate and enliven we see at the same time the development of stages of densification — from warmth to air, then to water and finally to solid, to the earth element, in the way I have described. The processes of densification and of rarefaction interpenetrate one another and together they give us a unified picture of the coming into existence of our earth. Whether we speak of the denser states — air, water, earth — or of the more rarefied states — light-ether, sound-ether, life-ether — we are concerned with manifestations, with the outer garments, as it were, of soul-spiritual Beings. Of these soul-spiritual Beings the first to appear before the mind's eye in the Genesis account are the Elohim, and the question arises: what kind of Beings are the Elohim? So that we may know where we are, we must be able to give them their proper place in the order of the hierarchies. You will no doubt remember, from the various lectures I have given in the course of years, or from what

you have read in my *Occult Science*, that in the hierarchical order going from above downward, we distinguish, first, a trinity which we call the Seraphim, Cherubim and Thrones. You know that then we come to a second hierarchy which we call the Kyriotetes or Dominions, [2] the Dynameis or Might, and the Exusiai or Powers, or Revelations; when we come to the lowest trinity, we usually make use of Christian designations, and speak of Archai, or Principalities, or Spirits of Personality; of Archangeloi or Archangels; of Angeloi or Angels. Those in this lowest group are the spiritual Beings who stand nearest to man. Only then do we come to man himself, as the tenth member within the hierarchical order. Now the question is, where within this order do the Elohim belong?

We find them in the second of these trinities, and identify them with those Beings whom we call Exusiai or Powers, or Spirits of Form. We know from what we have been taught for years that during the Saturn evolution the Archai, the Spirits of Personality, were at the human stage, the stage at which we ourselves now stand. During the Sun

evolution the Archangeloi or Archangels had their human stage; and during earth existence it is man who is at this stage. One grade above the Spirits of Personality we have the Spirits of Form, the Exusiai, who are also called Elohim. Thus the Elohim are lofty, sublime spiritual Beings who had advanced beyond the human stage before the time of Saturn, when our planetary existence began. We get an idea of the sublimity of these Beings if we bring home to ourselves that in the order of the hierarchies they stand four stages above the human. The spirituality which was weaving in this realm — which was, so to say, practising cosmic meditation, cosmic musing — and out of this cosmic meditation brought about our earth existence, was four stages above the human stage. Spiritual Beings at this stage can through their meditation work creatively — they are not, as men are, limited to the creation of thought forms. Because the meditative activity of the Elohim is four stages higher than human thinking, it is not merely an organising, a creative activity within the sphere of thought, but it forms and creates existence.

Having said this to begin with, the question now arises, what of the other hierarchies? First we should like to know what part was played in the Genesis account by the Beings whom we have called the Archai, or the Spirits of Personality. They constitute the next lower rank in the hierarchies. Let us once more remind ourselves that in the Elohim we have highly exalted Beings, Beings who at the time of the Saturn evolution had already risen above the human stage. They were active throughout the whole of the Saturn, Sun and Moon evolutions, creating and organising, and they are at work too in the earth evolution. Should we not expect to find the Spirits of Personality, the hierarchy next below that of the Elohim, mentioned in the Genesis account? Since we know what lofty, sublime Beings the Elohim are, we should expect to find the Principalities, or Spirits of Personality, at work in their service. Is there any indication in Genesis that after the Elohim had unfolded the main creative activity they made use of the Archai or Principalities as their servants in lesser activities? We know that the chief, the most comprehensive activity is undertaken by the

Elohim themselves; but after they had laid down the main lines, so to say, after they had exercised their great creative forces, did they not appoint other Beings such as the Archai to represent them on the spot?

To find the answer to this question we must first learn to understand Genesis in the right way. There is a passage in the Genesis account which has been a veritable stumbling-block to all the commentators, because for centuries they have completely ignored what occult investigation has had to say about the real meaning of the words with which our Bible opens. If you are at all familiar with modern Biblical criticism, you will know what difficulty this point has caused the commentators. There is a sentence in Genesis which is rendered *And God divided the light from the darkness*, and it is then made to appear that light and darkness alternated. I shall come back again to a closer examination of the words. For the time being I will make use of a translation into modern speech — it is not correct, and I am only using it provisionally. At a certain point it says:

And the evening and the morning were the first day. And further: *And God called the light Day.* This is a real stumbling-block for the world of letters! What then is a “day” of creation? The naive intellect regards a day as lasting twenty-four hours, as something which alternates between light and darkness, as does our day, during which we wake and sleep. Now of course you all know how much scorn has been heaped upon this naive idea of the creation of the world in seven such days. You perhaps also know how much labour — how much fruitless labour — has been applied to the task of identifying the seven days of creation with longer or shorter periods — geological epochs and so on — so as to make a “day” of creation signify some longer period of time.

The first difficulty arises of course when one comes to the fourth “day,” when Genesis first speaks of the setting up of sun and moon as directing time. Now every child today knows that the regulation of our twenty-four-hour day depends upon the relationship of the earth to the sun. But since the sun was not there until the

fourth “day,” we cannot speak of a twenty-four-hour day earlier than that. Thus anyone who tries to adhere to the naive belief that the day of the creation story is a day of twenty-four hours has to do violence to the Genesis account itself. There may of course be such people; but it must be objected to them that in insisting that Genesis refers to days such as ours they are certainly not supported by revelation. As to the vagaries of those who try to find a way out by giving a geological meaning to these “days” of creation, they are really not worth bothering about. For in the whole range of the literature of the subject there is not the slightest evidence that the word *yom* [3] signifies anything resembling a geological epoch.

What then is the meaning of the word *yom*, which is usually translated as “day”? Only those can form a judgment about this who are able to transport themselves in feeling, in attitude of soul, into ancient methods of naming things. The process of nomenclature in ancient times needed quite a different kind of feeling from what we have

today. To avoid too great a shock, let us take it step by step. Let me first draw your attention to a doctrine held by the Gnostics. They spoke of spiritual powers who played a part in our existence, who entered successively into the development of our existence, and these powers, these Beings, they called Aeons. By these Aeons they do not mean periods of time, but Beings. They mean that a first Aeon acts, and, having executed the work of which he is capable, is succeeded by a second Aeon, and after the second has exhausted his capacities, a third takes over, and so on. When the Gnostics spoke of Aeons, they meant Beings guiding development in succession, one taking over from another. It was only very much later that the purely abstract concept of time was associated with the word "Aeon." Aeon is a Being, a living entity. And just as "Aeon" expresses "living entity," so too does the Hebrew word *yom*. It has nothing to do with a merely abstract designation of time, but conveys the quality of being. *Yom* is a Being. And when one is dealing with seven such *yamim* following one another, one is dealing with seven consecutive

Beings or groups of Beings.

We find the same thing elsewhere concealed in a verbal resemblance. In the Aryan languages there is a connection between *deus* and *dies* — god and day. There is an essential inner relationship between this pair of words; in earlier times the connection between “day” and a Being was clearly felt, and when one spoke of weekdays, as we speak of Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and so on, one did not mean simply periods of time, but the groups of Beings working in Sun, Moon, Mars and so on. Let us then understand the word *yom*, which is usually rendered “day,” to mean a spiritual Being; then you have the hierarchical Beings one stage lower than the Elohim, Beings whom the Elohim used as subordinate spirits. After the Elohim through their higher organising powers had brought light into existence, they then appointed to his post *Yom*, the first of the Time-Spirits, or the Archai. Thus the spiritual Beings whom we call Spirits of Personality, or Principalities, are the same as those called in Genesis, Time-Intervals, Days, *Yamin*. They are

the servants of the Elohim. They carry out what the Elohim direct from their higher standpoint. Those of you who heard the lectures which I gave recently in Christiania [4] will remember that there too I called the Archai Time-Spirits, and described how they still work as Time-Spirits today. They were the servants of the Elohim. They were appointed by the Elohim to carry out the plans for which they themselves had laid down the main lines. In this way everything fits together into one great system, even for our understanding. But of course it is only when you have followed up what I am saying for years that you will acquire a real grasp of how everything without exception falls into place.

The exalted Beings of the Elohim entered into this interweaving of the several ethers, and of air, water and earth, and appointed Beings below them in rank as their servants. They gave these Beings their orders, so to say. In the moment when the Elohim had poured light into existence, they passed over to these Beings the task of carrying out in detail what had been set going. Thus we

may say that after the Elohim had created the light, they appointed the first Time-Spirit to represent them. It is this Spirit who is hidden behind the customary phrase “the first day.” We shall only understand the still deeper meaning of this first day when we also understand what lies behind the verse: *And the evening and the morning were the first day*. The first of the Time-Spirits entered into activity, and with this activity was associated what can be described as an alternation of *ereb* and *boker*. *Ereb* is not the same thing as evening, and *boker* is not the same thing as morning. An appropriate translation would be: “There was *ereb*, confusion; and there followed *boker*, organisation.” There was a state of disorder, and it was followed by a state of order, of harmony, brought about by the work of the first of the Time-Spirits.

Saturn	Sun	Moon	Earth
Warmth or Fire	Light	Sound	Life
	Warmth	Light	Sound
	Air	Warmth	Light
		Air	Warmth
		Water	Air
			Earth

Diagram 9

Notes:

[1] These lectures were in fact given in Prague in March 1911, and repeated in Stuttgart in November of the same year, and again in Munich and Berlin in 1912. Only the Berlin lectures have been published. (Ergebnisse der Geistesforschung, Basle, 1941.) They have not been translated.

[2] Wherever possible, the designations for the hierarchies used in this translation are those of the New Testament Authorised Version (Colos. 1:16 and Eph. 1:21). The “Dynameis” of Dionysius the Areopagite is sometimes translated “Virtues.” Cf. Milton's *Paradise Lost*.

[3]

יום

[4] “The Mission of Folk-Souls” See footnote, p. 71.

[5]

ערב

Diagram 7

[6]

פקר

Diagram 8

LECTURE V

IF we recall what we have learnt so far about our earth's beginnings, we find many things which still need to be explained. What we have so far learnt does, however, make clear that we have to look for much more reality — many more Beings — in Genesis than the usual translations convey.

We pointed out yesterday that the word *yom* does not indicate the abstract period of time which is what the word “day” means now, but refers to the Beings whom we call Spirits of Personality, Time-Spirits, Archai. This discovery enables us to enter more deeply into what I have already repeated several times: that behind the weaving life of elementary existence described in the Bible account of the creation, soul-spiritual Beings are everywhere to be seen. We may now see Being instead of empty abstractions behind much else

that comes before us in the Genesis account. Of course it is easy to see Being when the Bible is referring to the Spirit of the Elohim — *Ruach Elohim* [1] — but if we wish to grasp the sense of the ancient tradition we have to look for Being not only in those expressions where probably even modern minds would be prepared to recognise it; we must be prepared to find it everywhere. For example we should be quite justified in raising the question in connection with such expressions (to use my own words) as “The inner activity was *tohu wabohu*” and “And darkness was upon the elementary material existence.” Have we not perhaps also to see something of the nature of Being behind what is described as “darkness”? We cannot understand the Genesis account unless we can answer such questions. Just as we have to see manifestations of the spirit behind all that appears in the positive direction, such as light, air, water, earth, warmth, so we shall perhaps have to see manifestations of a deeper spiritual nature in the more negative expressions.

To get to the bottom of this, we must again go back to the earliest point we can reach in the development of our planet. As we have often said, we must think of the ancient Saturn existence as a condition of pure warmth, and that with the transition to the Sun there then took place on the one hand a densification to air or gas, on the other hand a rarefaction in the direction of the etheric, to light-ether. We have said that the passage in which the words ring forth *And God (the Elohim) said, Let there be light; and there was light* is describing a kind of repetition of this coming into existence of the light-ether.

Now we may ask: Was the darkness there of itself; or does spiritual Being lie behind this also? If you read the relevant passages in my *Occult Science* you will come across something extremely important for the understanding of all development — the fact that at each stage of evolution certain Beings remain behind. Only a certain number of Beings reach their goal. I have often used a singularly bald illustration, pointing out that not only are some schoolboys backward, to the sorrow

of their parents, but in the cosmic process, too, certain Beings do in fact lag behind, do not attain their appropriate goal. Thus we may say that during the ancient Saturn evolution certain Beings did not reach their proper goal, they lagged behind. During the Sun evolution they still remained at the Saturn stage.

How could one recognise on the Sun the Beings who were still really Saturn Beings? By the fact that they had not acquired the light nature, which was of the very essence of the Sun state. But because these Beings were nevertheless there, the Sun, which I have described as an inweaving of light, warmth and air, had darkness as well as light in it. And this darkness was the mark of the Beings remaining at the Saturn stage, just as the weaving light indicated the Beings who had progressed regularly to the Sun stage. Thus, there was an interweaving of Beings who were still at the Saturn stage of development with Beings who had progressed normally to the Sun stage. From the inner aspect these Beings moved in and out among one another; and outwardly they manifested

themselves as an interplay of light and darkness. We can call the manifestation of the more advanced Beings, light, and the manifestation of the Beings remaining behind at the Saturn stage, darkness.

If we know this, we shall expect the relationship between advanced and backward Beings to reappear during the recapitulation of the Saturn and Sun epochs in earth evolution. And because the backward Saturn Beings represent an earlier stage of evolution, they will appear earlier than the light in the recapitulation also. Thus, quite rightly, in the first verse of Genesis we are told that darkness prevailed over the elementary substances. That is the recapitulation of the Saturn existence, now a backward one. The Sun existence has to wait; it comes later, it comes at the point where the Bible says: *Let there be light*.

Thus we see that the Genesis story is in complete accordance with the recapitulation described in my *Occult Science*.

If we would understand existence, we must be clear that what emerged at an earlier stage does not just go on for a time and then disappear. Something new is continually arising, but the old remains actual alongside the new and continues to work within it. And so even today we have co-existing the two stages of evolution which we can call light and darkness. Light and darkness permeate our existence.

Here we come to a rather thorny subject. Possibly some of you may know that for the last thirty years or so I have been trying at intervals to show the deep significance and value of Goethe's *Theory of Colour*. Of course, anyone who supports this theory today must make up his mind that he will not gain the ear of his contemporaries. For those whose knowledge of physics would qualify them to understand its significance are today wholly unprepared for it. Modern physics, with its fantastic nonsense about ether vibrations and so on, is utterly incapable of penetrating to the real heart of Goethe's *Theory of Colour*. For this we shall still have to wait for several decades. Anyone

who treats of the subject knows that. And the others — forgive me for saying this — those whose knowledge of occultism would perhaps equip them to understand the essential nature of the Goethean theory, know too little about physics for me to be able to discuss the subject in detail. Thus there is today no proper basis for such a discussion. The fundamental content of Goethe's theory of colour is the mystery of light and darkness, working together as two real polaric entities in the world. The concept of matter which is put forward today is simply a fantasy; it is an illusion. Matter is in reality a soul-spiritual being, which is to be traced everywhere where the polaric contrast of light and darkness is effective. The physical notion of matter which is generally accepted is, in truth, a chimera. In the regions of space where, according to physics, we are to look for a sort of apparition called “matter,” there is in actual fact nothing else but a certain degree of darkness. And this dark content of space is filled out with something of a soul-spiritual nature, something akin to what is intended in Genesis in the passage where “darkness” (the word used to

denote the collective whole of this soul-spiritual entity) is described as weaving over the elementary existence. [1] All these things are much more profound than modern natural science dreams! Thus when Genesis speaks of darkness, it is speaking of the manifestation of the backward Saturn Beings. And when it speaks of light, it is referring to the advanced Beings. They interact and interweave with one another.

We said yesterday that the main lines, the main features, of evolution were laid down by Beings at the stage of the Exusiai, the Spirits of Form, so that these Beings plan the general direction of the activities of light. And further, we have seen that they make use of the Spirits of Personality as their servants, and that behind the expression *yom*, day, we have to see a Being of the rank of the Archai, appointed under the Elohim. We may also assume that, just as on the positive side these servants of the Elohim, these Spirits of Personality indicated by *yom*, are active, so also the backward spiritual Beings, who work in opposition to them in darkness, play their part. Indeed we may say that

darkness is something that the Elohim find already there. Light is something they bring into being through their musing, their meditation. When they think out the two complexes from what has remained over from the earlier existence, it comes about that darkness is interwoven therein as the expression of the backward Beings. They themselves bestow the light. But just as out of the light the Elohim appoint the Beings represented by *yom*, day, so out of the darkness come Beings who are of the same rank as these, but Beings who have lagged behind at an earlier stage. Thus we can say that all that manifests itself as darkness stands together on one side in opposition to the Elohim. And now we have to ask, who are the Beings who oppose the Archai, servants of the Elohim, the Beings indicated by the word *yom*? Who are the corresponding backward Beings in opposition to them?

To avoid misunderstanding, it would be as well to clear up first another point — whether we have always to look upon these backward Beings as evil, as something wrong in the world-context. It is

easy for the abstract man, the man who is concerned only with concepts, to feel something like indignation over the backward Beings; or he can make the mistake of being sorry for the poor things! We should not harbour feelings and ideas of such a kind as regards these tremendous realities of the universe. That would lead us completely astray. On the contrary we should remind ourselves that everything happens out of cosmic wisdom, and that whenever Beings remain behind at a particular stage of development, it means something; it has significance for the whole for Beings to remain behind, just as it has for them to attain their goal; in other words, there are certain functions which cannot be carried out by the advanced Beings, functions for which Beings are needed who remain at an earlier stage. They are in their proper place in their backwardness. What would become of the world if all those who ought to be teachers of young children were to become university professors? Those who do not become professors are much better where they are than the professors would be. Those who occupy academic chairs would probably turn out to be

very badly suited for the instruction of seven-, eight-, nine- and ten-year-olds! Something of the same kind is true in cosmic relationships. There are certain tasks for which those who attain their goal would be little fitted. For certain tasks those who have remained behind — we could equally well say those who have renounced progress — must take their place. And just as the advanced Spirits of Personality, the *Yamim*, were given their task by the Elohim, so the backward Archai also, those Spirits of Personality who reveal themselves not through light, but through darkness, are made use of in order to evoke the laws of earthly development. They are allotted their proper place, so that they may make their contribution to the orderly development of our existence.

How important that is we can see from an illustration borrowed from everyday life. The light of which Genesis speaks is not the light which we can see with our physical eyes — that is a subsequent form of light. In the same way what we designate as physical darkness, what surrounds us at night, is a later form of what is called darkness

in Genesis. None of you will doubt that the physical daylight which we see nowadays is important both for man and for other living things. Take for example the plants! If you remove them from the light they deteriorate, become stunted in their growth. Light is an element of life for every living thing, and, so far as their external physical existence is concerned, it is a necessity for men too.

But something else is also necessary as well as light. To understand what this is, we have to consider the rhythmic alternation of sleeping and waking. What does it really mean to be awake? All the activity of our souls, all that we develop in our thinking and feeling, all the ebb and flow of our passions — in short, all that happens through the fluctuating energies of our astral bodies and our egos, constitutes a continual using up of our physical bodies during day life. That is a very ancient occult truth, a truth to which even modern physiology comes if it knows how to interpret its own findings properly. What the soul unfolds as its inner life in the waking state continuously uses up

the forces of the external physical body, the first rudiments of which were bestowed during the Saturn existence. The life of the physical body is quite different in sleep, when the astral body with its fluctuant inner life is outside it. Whereas in waking life there is a continuous consumption, or even a continuous destruction, of the forces of the physical body, in sleep these forces are being restored, being renewed and built up again all the time. So that in our physical and etheric bodies we have to distinguish destructive processes and processes of renewal — destructive processes which take place during waking life, processes of renewal which take place during sleep. But nothing which happens anywhere in space is isolated, it is always related to existence as a whole. And we must not think of those processes of destruction, which take place in our physical bodies from the time we awaken to the time we go to sleep again, as being confined within the limits of our skin. They are closely bound up with cosmic processes. They are merely a continuation of what flows into us from outside, so that during the waking life of day we are connected with the

destructive forces of the universe, and during sleep with the forces of renewal.

This destruction of our physical bodies which goes on during the waking life of day could not have happened during the Saturn evolution, otherwise the first rudiments of our physical body could never have been formed. For obviously one can build up nothing if one starts to destroy it. The Saturnian operation on our bodies had to be a constructive one. The destructive process takes place in the daytime under the influence of light, but on Saturn there was no light. Therefore the Saturn activity on our physical bodies was an up-building one, and had to be maintained at least for a time, even into the later period, when on the Sun light appeared. Then the up-building activity could only be maintained through Saturn Beings remaining behind to care for it.

It was necessary for the Saturn Beings to be kept back in cosmic evolution, so that they could undertake the rebuilding of the physical body during sleep, while there was no light. Thus the backward Saturn Beings have their part to play in

our existence; without them we should be exposed to nothing but destruction. There has to be an alternation, a co-operation, of Sun Beings and Saturn Beings, of light and darkness. Thus if the activity of the light Beings is to be rightly guided by the Elohim, they must inweave into their own work in an orderly fashion the work of the Beings of darkness. There can be no stability in cosmic activity unless the force of darkness is everywhere interwoven with the force of light. And in this complication of the forces of light and darkness lies one of the secrets of cosmic existence, of cosmic alchemy. This secret is touched upon in the seventh scene of my first Mystery Play, where Johannes Thomasius enters Devachan, and where one of Maria's companions, Astrid, is given the task of weaving the dark into the light. Throughout the conversation between Maria and her three companions you will find many cosmic mysteries concealed, which can well be pondered for a long, long time.

Thus we must never forget that the interplay between the forces of sun-light and Saturn-

darkness is a necessity of our existence. When therefore the Elohim placed the Spirits of Personality as their deputies in charge of the weaving of the light forces, of the work which is performed upon us men and upon other earthly beings while the light is affecting us, they had also to appoint the backward Saturn Beings as fellow-workers; they had to see that the whole work of the universe was carried on by the normally advanced and the backward Archai together. The backward Archai are active in the darkness. Hence the Elohim employ not only the Beings designated by yom, day, but they set in opposition to them Beings who weave in the darkness. And the Bible says with a wonderfully realistic description of the facts: *And God called the light Day (yom), and the darkness He called Night (lay'lah)*. [2] And *lay'lah* does not mean our abstract night, but *lay'lah* are the Saturn Archai, who at that time had not advanced to the Sun stage. And to this day it is they who are active in us during sleep, when they work upon our physical and etheric bodies, building them up. This mysterious expression *lay'lah*, which has given rise to all kinds of myths,

is neither our abstract “night” nor is it anything which need lead to myth-making. It is simply the name of the backward Archai, who unite their activity with that of the advanced Archai.

Thus we have paraphrased the appropriate words in Genesis somewhat as follows: The Elohim planned the main lines of existence; they deputed the advanced Archai to work under them, and appointed to help them those Archai who in resignation had remained in darkness at the Saturn stage, in order that existence could come about. Thus we have *yom* and *lay'lah* as two contrasted groups of Beings, who help the Elohim and who are at the stage of the Time-Spirits, the Spirits of Personality. We see existence being woven out of the Spirits of Form and the Spirits of Personality, out of advanced Beings and the backward Beings of these two hierarchies.

Now that we have found an answer to these questions which satisfies us up to a certain point (there is of course much more behind all these things), another question will be on the tip of all your tongues. What of the other hierarchies? We

distinguish among the hierarchies in descending order from the Spirits of Form, first the Archai, the Spirits of Personality, then the Archangeloi, the Archangels, or Fire-Spirits. Does Genesis say nothing of these? Let us look more closely to find out what the position is with regard to the Fire-Spirits. We know that they reached their human stage during the Sun evolution. They have advanced through the Moon stage to that of earth. They are the Beings who are inwardly connected with everything of a sun nature, for it was during the Sun evolution that they reached their human stage. And when during the Moon evolution it became necessary for the Sun to separate from the earth, which was at that time of a Moon nature, then these Beings, who had gone through their most important stage of development on the Sun, who were, so to say, by their very nature associated with the Sun, naturally remained united with the Sun. When therefore the Moon (later to become earth) separated from the Sun, these Beings remained, not with the separating Earth-Moon, but with the Sun. They are the principal Beings who work upon the earth from without.

I have already indicated that in the evolution from Saturn to Sun, the highest form of life which could be reached on the Sun was the plant species. Before an animal nature with an inner life could come about there had to be a separation, a cleavage. Thus it was not until the Moon evolution that anything of an animal nature could arise. An influence from without was needed. Now in Genesis we are not told of anything being active from without up to the end of the third day of creation. The transition from the third to the fourth day is an important one, for we are told that on the fourth day light forces, Beings of light, began to be active from without. So that, just as in the Moon period the sun shone upon the Moon from without, so now both the sun and the moon shone upon the earth from without. It amounts to no less than this — up to this point all those forces which were themselves within the earth element could take effect. Up to this point it was possible for there to be a recapitulation of earlier stages of evolution, and for forces centralised in the earth itself to arise anew. Thus we saw yesterday how in the Spirit of the Elohim who brooded over the

waters the warmth state was recapitulated; how in the moment designated by the words *Let there be light* the entry of light was recapitulated; how at the point where the forces of the sound-ether broke in and separated the upper from the lower, the sound-ether stage was recapitulated. That was on the second day of creation. Then we saw how the life-ether intervened on the third day, when out of the earth element, out of the new condition, there came forth all that can be brought about by the life-ether — the sprouting green. But in order for anything animal to find a place on the earth there has to be a repetition of the “being shone upon” (if I may use the expression), an influence of forces acting from without. Hence it is quite in accordance with the facts that there should be no mention in Genesis of anything of an animal nature until after we have been told of forces working upon the earth from cosmic space. Up to that time Genesis speaks only of the plant nature; all the beings on the earth were at the plant stage. The animal nature could not begin until light Beings were influencing the earth from its environment.

What then came about is described in Genesis in words of which various translations exist. [The English Authorised Version is: *And God said, ... let them be for signs, and for seasons, and for days, and years.*]

Now there are some commentators, some exegetists, who have begun to think. But at the present day, when people scorn to penetrate to fundamental realities, it is the wretched lot of commentators that they begin to think, but cannot think anything through to the end. I have known some of these commentators who have reached the point of acknowledging that the usual rendering is nonsense. I should like to meet the man who can really make any sense of these words. What really lies behind them?

If we wish to render this passage faithfully with a real sense of the associations which the words would have had for the ancient Hebrew sage, and with philological thoroughness, we shall have to say that once more it is not a question of signs, but of the activity of living Beings making themselves known in the form of successive events in time. A

correct translation would be: And the Elohim appointed Beings to regulate the course of time for the beings on earth, to regulate specific divisions of time (the word “day” is not mentioned at all), larger or smaller periods (usually given as “year” and “day”). Thus the reference is to those Beings who stand next below the rank of the Archai and who regulate life. The tasks performed by the Time-Spirits, the Archai, lie a stage lower than the tasks of the Elohim. Then come the regulators, the sign-fixers, for what has to be regulated, grouped, within the activity of the Archai. But these are none other than the Archangels. Thus we may venture to say that in the moment to which Genesis refers, when not only is something taking place in the body of the earth, but when forces are working into the earth from without, it becomes possible for Beings who are already united with the sun existence — the regulating Archangels, who are one stage lower than the Archai — to intervene. While the Archai themselves are still active as Aeons, for the deployment of their forces they make use of the Archangels, the light-bearers, who act from the circumference. That means that

through the constellations of the light-Beings surrounding the earth, the Archangels work out of cosmic space in such a way that the great ordinances laid down by the Archai may be carried into effect.

Those who were present at the course of lectures I gave in Christiania will remember that even today the Archai are still behind what we are accustomed to call the Spirit of the Age. If we look around at the way our own world has been organised, we find that each age has a number of peoples over whom for a specific period a Time-Spirit holds sway. Side by side with him and subordinated to him work the several Folk-Spirits. And just as today the Spirits of the Age or Time-Spirits are in control, and behind them are the Archai — I described that in my Christiania lectures [3] — so behind the Folk-Spirits are the Archangels; in a certain way they are the Folk-Spirits. Genesis points to the fact that even in times when man himself was really not yet there, these spiritual Beings were the organising powers.

Thus we must say that it was the Elohim who brought light into existence; they manifested themselves through light. But for lesser activities within the light they appointed the Archai, who are indicated in Genesis by the word yom, and who ranked next below them among the hierarchies; and they placed beside the Archai the Beings who must of necessity be woven into the web of existence, in order that the requisite activity of darkness can come into association with the activity of light. Side by side with yom they placed lay'lah, which is usually translated “night.” Then it became a question of how to progress further and into greater detail. For this, other Beings from the ranks of the hierarchies are chosen. Thus when it has been said that the Elohim or Spirits of Form manifested themselves through light, and placed the affairs of light and darkness in charge of the Archai, one has to add that now they took another step and, specialising further, appointed the Archangels to activities which not only call an external plant life into existence, but which are now to call forth an inner life, an inner life capable of reflecting the outer; they entrusted to the

Archangels the activity which has to stream upon our earth from without, so that not only can the plant species shoot up, but also the animal nature, weaving its inward life of image and sensation.

Thus we see how, when we know how to interpret it, the Genesis account refers to Archangels too, quite in accordance with the facts. When you turn to the exegesis of the general run of commentators you will always feel dissatisfied. But if you turn for help to the same source from which the Genesis account came, if you turn to Occult Science, a flood of light will be thrown upon that account. It will all appear to you in a new light. And this ancient document, which otherwise would inevitably remain incomprehensible, because of the impossibility of translating the ancient living words into our language, will endure as a document which speaks to mankind for all time.

Notes:

[1] According to the Authorised Version: and darkness was upon the face of the deep.

[2]

לילה.

Diagram 10

The “y” is consonantal, as in the word yellow.

[3] ***“The Mission of Folk-Souls in connection with Germanic and Scandinavian Mythology.”***

Eleven lectures by Rudolf Steiner given at Oslo in June, 1910.

LECTURE VI

DURING these lectures I shall try to throw light on the Genesis story of creation from many different aspects. Of course you must never lose sight of our essential preoccupation as Anthroposophists, which is with the facts of spiritual life. All our lectures are concerned first and foremost with the circumstances of spiritual life, of spiritual evolution. So too what is of primary importance as regards the Genesis story is to ascertain what were the supersensible events, the supersensible facts, which preceded the visible course of our earth's evolution. Only after that do we think it specially important to find confirmed in ancient documents of various ages and various peoples what we have first established independently of any documents, out of spiritual investigation itself. It helps us to acquire the

proper feeling, the right attitude of reverence for what resounds in our hearts from far-off ages. We are able to come to an understanding with those times, which we ourselves have lived through in other bodies; we are able to form a link with what must have affected us in past epochs. This is how we have to understand the underlying purpose of this course of lectures.

We tried in the preceding lectures to form an idea as to how spiritual Beings, whom we know from Spiritual Science, are to be rediscovered in Genesis. We have already partly succeeded. We have borne in mind throughout that in what confronts us in the outer world, even in what we meet in the lower stages of clairvoyant consciousness — and in Genesis we have to do with facts of clairvoyant consciousness all the time — we are dealing with maya, with illusion; we have borne in mind that our usual interpretation of the sense-world, as it presents itself primarily to our faculty of knowledge, is *maya*, or illusion. That is a statement which is familiar to anyone who has anything to do with Spiritual Science.

Moreover, the fact that the lower region of clairvoyance, all that has to do with the etheric and astral worlds, in a higher sense also belongs to the sphere of deception, cannot remain hidden from anyone who has familiarised himself with the spiritual scientific outlook for any length of time. We strike, as it were, the true ground of existence — so far as it is attainable by us — only when we have pushed beyond these regions to its deeper source. We must always bear this in mind. And we must not be content to voice it as a theory, but the conviction must pass over into our flesh and blood, that in clinging to external existence we are surrendering to illusion. On the other hand, to ignore external existence, to prize it too lightly, is also one of the great illusions into which men can fall.

Let us consider the elementary existence which has been so often mentioned in these lectures, and which is the nearest realm attainable behind our physical existence, behind what we perceive with our senses. Spiritual Science characterises it as the existence lying behind earth, water, air and fire or

warmth, light, sound-ether and life-ether. We try to acquire ideas about the nature of earth, water, air, and so on, and to grasp them firmly. We have not done very much if, with a certain intellectual superiority which can easily become rife among anthroposophical devotees, we just say “that is all *maya*, illusion”; for it is nevertheless through this *maya* that the real Beings reveal themselves. And if we scorn to look at the manifestations, if we scorn to get to know the tools and instruments through which they reveal themselves, we have no means of making existence comprehensible. We must be clear that when we say “water,” “air,” and so on, we are referring to expressions, to manifestations, of real spiritualities, but that if we refuse to have anything to do with this *maya*, we can acquire no ideas of what lies behind it.

Now let us consider the nature of the earth element. We know well by now that there was no question of such an earth condition during the Saturn, Sun or Moon evolutions. We know that evolution had to wait, we know that it was not until the time of our own planetary existence that

the earth element could be added to the warmth of Saturn, to the aeriform element of the Sun, and to the water element of the Moon. We know that each advance in evolution can only take place through the work of spiritual Beings. To include what we today call our physical body, the lowest member of our human being, and to give it its place in this elemental existence, we may say that from the first rudiments which it developed on Saturn it too has struggled through all these conditions. Thus we have in our own outer physical bodies something of which we can say that it has passed through an existence in pure warmth, an existence as a body of air, an existence as a body of water, and has risen to an earth existence. We know too who were the Beings on Saturn who participated in the first stages of the work on the human physical body. You will remember that I said in *Occult Science* — and I have frequently said it elsewhere — that to begin with, certain spiritual Beings worked on.

Saturn who had passed through their lower stages of evolution in a long distant past, and who were already so far advanced that they were able to

sacrifice their own corporeality to supply the foundation, the basic substance for Saturn. In the order of the hierarchies these spiritual Beings are none other than those whom we call the Spirits of Will. Into the substance thus provided, which had been offered as a sacrifice by the Spirits of Will, the other hierarchies then worked. Into this substance the Spirits of Personality worked, and imprinted in it their own “humanity.” It was this will-substance which worked in Saturn as the warmth element, and it was in this that the first rudiments of the human physical body were formed.

But you must not think that such Beings as the Spirits of Will finished their work at a specific stage. Although they performed their main task on Saturn, yet they have continued to work during the whole course of development on Sun, Moon and earth. They have retained a certain connection with the substance for which they made their self-sacrifice. We saw that during the Sun evolution the warmth element transformed itself in the downward direction, that is, in the direction of

densification, into the element of air. Such a process as the densification of warmth into air, which we can follow in its external manifestation — such a process is just *maya*; it gives us the illusion of densification. Within the process itself lies spiritual weaving, spiritual being, spiritual activity. And anyone who wishes to get to the bottom of things has to ask himself which of the hierarchies has brought it about that out of the more rarefied warmth-substance, the denser air comes into being. It is those very Spirits of Will who sacrificed the warmth-substance out of themselves who have brought this about! We may describe their activity by saying that during the Saturn evolution they were so advanced as to be able to allow their own substance to flow out as warmth, so advanced as to be able to offer their own substance as a sacrifice, so advanced that their fire streamed into the planetary existence of Saturn. Then during the Sun evolution they condensed this, their fire, into the gaseous element. But it was also they who during the Moon evolution condensed their gaseous element to water. During the earth evolution they have

further condensed their watery element into the earth element, into solid. Thus, when we look upon the solid matter in the world, we have to say to ourselves that in this solid matter forces are at work which alone make its existence possible, forces whose very being flowed out from Saturn as warmth and whose effluence has become denser and denser until it has now reached the solid state, held together by their power. And if we would know who it is that brings this about, if we would look beyond the *maya* of solid matter, we should have to say that behind all this solid matter which we encounter there work and weave the Spirits of Will, the Thrones. Thus the Spirits of Will are still present in earth existence.

What we are told in Genesis now appears to us in a new light. When we are told that what is expressed in Genesis as *bara* is a kind of meditative activity of the Elohim, we have to say that through their meditation the Elohim recreated, as out of memory, something which I have described as a complex of existence. But in a certain way there happened to the Elohim what

happens to us when we try to create something out of memory, though we, of course, unfold our activity at a much lower level. Let me give you an example. A man goes to sleep at night. His world of thought and feeling sinks into oblivion, he passes into the condition of sleep. Suppose that the last thought he had before he fell asleep in the evening was of a rose beside him. This thought sinks into oblivion. In the morning the thought of the rose emerges again. Even if the rose no longer remained by him, the thought would be there. You must distinguish between two things. The one is the calling up in memory of the idea of the rose, which could occur even if the rose had been taken away. But if the rose is still there, he also perceives the actual rose. That is the other thing. In the same way you should distinguish two things in what I have described as the cosmic meditation of the Elohim. When we are told that on the third “day” of creation a cosmic meditation took place, that the Elohim made a division between the fluid and the solid, that they separate off the solid and call it earth, in this we must certainly think of the cosmic act of meditation of the Elohim from

whom this creative thought springs; but in what arises to meet their musing we have to think of the Spirits of Will at work, now bringing forth once more the objective in its own substantial nature. Thus work the Spirits of Will, and so they have worked from the very beginning in everything of an earth nature.

You must make yourselves familiar with such ideas. You must get used to the thought that in what lies nearest to us, and which we often regard as very lowly, we sometimes meet very high and exalted Beings. It is easy to say of the solid element that it is only matter. Perhaps some may be tempted to say that it is no concern of the spiritual investigator — that matter is a low level of existence. Why should we bother with it? We pass beyond and above matter into the spiritual. Anyone who thinks in this way forgets that through countless ages high, exalted spiritual Beings have worked in the object of his contempt to bring it into this solid state. Actually, when we penetrate through external matter, through the elementary covering of the earth, to what has

made this earth covering solid, it would be natural to feel the deepest reverence for the exalted Beings we call the Spirits of Will, who have laboured so long in this earth element to build up the solid ground upon which we tread, and which we ourselves bear within us in the earthly constituents of our physical bodies. It is these Spirits of Will, whom in Christian esotericism we also call the Thrones, who have in fact constructed — or rather condensed — the solid ground upon which we walk. The esotericists who gave names to what the Spirits of Will brought forth within our earth existence called these Spirits Thrones, because they built thrones upon which we are all the time being supported, as upon a solid ground, and upon which all the rest of our earth existence continues to base itself as upon firm seats. These ancient expressions contain something worthy of tremendous respect, something to which our feeling can fully respond.

If we now reascend from the solid to the watery condition, we may reflect that it took longer to build up and densify the earth element than the

watery. Hence we have to look for the fundamental forces of the watery element in Beings of a lower hierarchy. For the condensation of the watery element, as it is at work around us in the elementary state, it needed only the activity of the Spirits of Wisdom, the Kyriotetes, the Dominions. Thus behind the solid basis we see the Spirits of Will, and, not behind physical water, but behind the forces of fluidity, we have to see the activity of the Spirits of Wisdom or Kyriotetes. When we ascend to the airy element, here we have to see a still lower hierarchy at work. In the airy formations around us, to the extent that they are brought about by forces lying behind them, we have also to see the effect of the activity of certain spirits of the hierarchies. Just as the Spirits of Wisdom work in the water nature, so the Spirits of Movement — the Dynameis, the Might, as we are accustomed to call them in Christian esotericism — are at work in the aeriform. And when we come to the warmth nature, to the next stage of rarefaction, then it is the next lower hierarchy, the Spirits of Form — the Exusiai — who live and weave within it, the very spirits whom we have

been speaking of for days as the Elohim. Up to the present we have, from quite a different direction, characterised the Spirits of Form as the Spirits who brooded in the warmth element. When we trace the order of the hierarchies in the downward direction from the Spirits of Will, through the Spirits of Wisdom and the Spirits of Movement, we come back to our Elohim, to the Spirits of Form. You see how everything fits together, if the threads are woven in the right way. If you now try to bring sensitive and perceptive feeling into all this, you will say that behind all we see around us through our senses there lies an elementary existence — an earth element, but within this element in truth there live the Spirits of Will; a fluid element, in which in truth live the Spirits of Wisdom; an airy element, within which in truth live the Spirits of Movement; and a warmth element, wherein in truth live the Spirits of Form, the Elohim.

We must not think that we can make a clear separation between these spheres, that we can draw hard and fast boundaries between them. Our

entire earth subsists in the fact that watery, aeriform and solid are working one within another, and that warmth permeates everything. We find warmth everywhere within the other stages of elementary existence. Hence we can also say that we find everywhere the activity of the Elohim, the real force behind warmth; it has poured itself out into everything. Although it necessarily required the activities of the Spirits of Will, the Spirits of Wisdom, the Spirits of Movement in order to display itself, nevertheless throughout earth evolution this element of warmth, which is the manifestation of the Spirits of Form, permeated all the lower stages of existence. Thus in the solid element we shall find not just the substantial basis, the body of the Spirits of Will, but the body of the Spirits of Will permeated and interwoven by the Elohim themselves, by the Spirits of Form.

Now let us try to find the outer expression in the sense-world of what we have just been talking about. We have been describing what is in the supersensible — an interweaving of the Spirits of Will, the Thrones, with the Spirits of Form, the

Elohim. That is something which lies in the supersensible. But everything super-sensible casts its shadow into the sense-world. What is the shadow in this case? That which in effect constitutes the body, the phenomenal existence, of the Spirits of Will is matter, outspread solid matter. The commonly accepted idea of matter is illusion. When the seer turns his attention to the places where matter is supposed to lead its dubious existence, he does not find the fantastic apparition of physical matter, for that is an empty dream. Matter as conceived by the physicists is pure fantasy. So long as these concepts are merely used as calculating devices it is all right. But when men think that they have discovered something self-existent and real, then they are dreaming. The theories of modern physics are in fact dreams. In so far as physicists take note of facts, describe facts — the real and actual which the eye can see, and what can be deduced from that by calculation — they are dealing with reality. But as soon as they begin to speculate about atoms and molecules, as if these were simply material entities, then they begin to spin a dream-universe;

and one which reminds us of Felix Balde's ducats in my Mystery Play, when he says in the temple: "Fancy telling a man from whom you wanted to buy something: 'I won't pay for it in solid coin, but I promise to condense some ducats out of some mist!'" This crude simile really does give a fair idea of the sort of physical theory that gaily assumes whole universes to have been constructed out of cosmic mist. It is pure fantasy to take the existence of atoms, as envisaged today, to be real. So long as atoms are looked upon merely as counters, or shorthand notes for what the senses actually show, we remain on solid ground. If one wants to penetrate behind the sense-perceptible basis, then one has to rise to the spiritual, and then one reaches the living movement of a basic substance which is none other than the body of the Thrones, permeated by the activity of the Spirits of Form. And how is that projected into our sense-world? In the sense-world it becomes the expanse of solid matter, but matter which is at no stage amorphous. The amorphous, the formless, only results from the fact that all existence which tends towards form gets crushed or ground down. None

of the dust which we find in the world is dust by natural tendency. It is stuff which has been worn away. Matter has the tendency to take form, to become crystalline. Solid matter tends towards the form of the crystal. So we can say that it is the substance of the Thrones and of the Elohim which compresses itself into our sense-existence to become revealed as the solid matter we see around us. In the act of making manifest what we call matter, it announces itself as the essential Being of the Thrones; in so far as this basic substance takes on form, takes on shape, it announces itself as the external revelation of the Elohim.

Look with what spiritual insight names were given in ancient times! The seers of old said to themselves: "If we look upon the material substance around us, it speaks to us in the Being of the Thrones; but it is permeated by an element of force which tries to bring it all into form, hence the name Spirits of Form." In all these names there is a hint of the reality they stand for. If we look at the tendency towards crystalline form around us, we have at a lower level a manifestation of the

forces which weave and hold sway in the substance of the Thrones as the Spirits of Form, as the Elohim themselves. That is their field of action. They are the smiths, forging in their warmth element the crystalline forms of the different earths and metals, out of the formless matter of the Spirits of Will. They are the Spirits who in their activity of warmth at the same time constitute the form principle in existence.

When we look at things in this way, we gaze into the living, moving being which stirs beneath our existence. And in this way we must accustom ourselves to see *maya* or illusion in all that we encounter in outer life. But we must not stop short at the empty theory that the external world is *maya*. To say that gets us nowhere. It only has meaning when we can penetrate through all the details of that *maya* to the real being behind it. Then it is useful. So let us accustom ourselves to see in all that happens around us something which, though certainly illusion, is at the same time truth. An appearance is precisely an appearance. As such it is a fact; but we do not understand it if we stop

short at its apparition. We can only appreciate it and give it its proper value *as* appearance, if we go on beyond the appearance.

In our modern abstract way of looking at things everything gets mixed up. The seers of old could not confuse things in this way. They could not be content to see everywhere the same superficial forces as the modern physicist sees, who insists on embracing meteorology as well as physics within his sphere. For who today doubts that the same forces which are at work in elementary life — in the solid, the fluid and so on — are active too within the atmosphere, when water masses into cloud. I know quite well that the modern physicist cannot help assuming that, as physicist, he can aspire to be a meteorologist too, and that for him nothing makes sense unless he applies the same laws to the formation of the clouds around our earth as he applies to things on the earth. To the seer things are not so simple as that. As soon as things are traced back to their spiritual sources, the same thing is not seen everywhere. Different forces are at work when a gas condenses to liquid

actually on earth, and when the gaseous, vaporous tendency in the environment of the earth forms watery cumuli. When the seer contemplates the way in which water arises in the atmosphere around us, he cannot say that it comes into being in the same way as on the ground; he cannot say that the water hovering above us comes into existence in the same way as the water which condenses in the soil, on the ground. For the truth is that the Beings who play their part in cloud formation are different from those who are at work in the formation of water on the earth. What I have just been saying as to the participation of the hierarchies in our elementary existence only applies on the earth from its centre point up to the surface where we ourselves are; the same forces do not extend as far as the formation of the clouds. There other Beings are at work. The scientific theory derived from modern physics is based on a very simple hypothesis. First it discovers certain physical laws, and then it says that these laws apply to the whole of existence. It overlooks all the differences in the different spheres of existence. It acts on the principle that in the night

all cows are grey; but things are not the same everywhere, they are very different in different spheres!

Anyone who has become aware through clairvoyant investigation that on our earth the Spirits of Will or the Thrones hold sway in the earth element, the Spirits of Wisdom in the element of water, the Spirits of Movement in the aeriform element, the Elohim in the warmth, gradually attains to the knowledge that in the gathering of the clouds, in that unique process which goes on around the earth wherein the watery vapour becomes water, Beings belonging to the hierarchy of the Cherubim are at work. Thus in the solid matter of our elementary earth existence, we see a co-operation of the Elohim with the Thrones. In the element of air, in which the Spirits of Movement hold sway, we see the Cherubim too at work in order that the water mounting upward from the realm of the Spirits of Wisdom may be enabled to accumulate into clouds. In the environment of our earth, the Cherubim hold sway as truly as do the Thrones, the Spirits of Wisdom

and the Spirits of Movement within the elementary existence of our earth. And now if we look to the moving being of these cloud formations, we find hidden within them something still deeper, which only occasionally reveals itself — the thunder and lightning which bursts forth from them. This is not something which comes from nowhere. The seer knows that the Spirits whom we call the Seraphim move and have their being in this activity.

Within the limits of our earth sphere, if we include the atmosphere around us, we have now found every one of the hierarchical ranks. Thus, in what we experience with our senses we see the manifestation of hierarchical activity. It would be utter nonsense to regard the lightning flashing forth from the cloud as the same thing as what one sees when one strikes a match. Quite different forces are at work when the element of electricity, which prevails in the lightning, comes forth out of matter. There the Seraphim are at work.

Thus we have rediscovered the totality of the hierarchies in the earth's environment, just as we can find them in the cosmos without. The activity

of these hierarchies is extended to all that we find in our immediate environment.

When you go through the pages of Genesis, when you contemplate the mighty course of world evolution depicted there, you discover that it is a recapitulation of the previous stages of evolution, a recapitulation of what evolved during the Saturn, Sun and Moon evolutions, and that finally man emerges as the crowning achievement of evolution. We have to understand from this Genesis account that the whole being and activity of the hierarchies is engaged in what is there taking place, that all is concentrated upon this last product of creation, upon this supersensible being of whom it is said: The Elohim made a decision, saying *Let us make man*. In order to do this they wove together all their separate talents into one common activity. All the capacities which they had brought over from earlier stages they combined together, so as at length to produce man. Thus all the hierarchies which preceded that of man — hierarchies to which we give the names Seraphim, Cherubim, Thrones, Spirits of Wisdom, Spirits of

Movement, Spirits of Form, Archai or Spirits of Personality, Fire-Spirits or Archangels, and Angels — moved and had their being in this existence; and if we follow the Genesis account up to the crowning of the structure on the sixth “day” of creation with the appearance of man, if we pass in review the whole of the weaving essence of pre-human earthly evolution, we find all the different hierarchies already there. All these hierarchies had to work together to prepare for what at last emerges in man.

Thus we may venture to say that the seer or seers who were responsible for the Genesis account were aware that all the hierarchies we have mentioned had to work to make preparation for man. But they must also have been aware that for the creation of man himself, for the crowning fulfilment of this entire hierarchical order, help had to come from yet another quarter, from a source in a way still higher than any of these hierarchies. Thus we look up beyond the Seraphim to a divine Being unknown, only dimly sensed. Let us follow up the activity of some member of the

hierarchical order, say of the Elohim; so long as they had not decided to put the finishing touch to their work by fashioning man, it sufficed for them to work in harmony with the other hierarchies up to the Seraphim. But then help had to come from a realm to which we can only raise our spiritual gaze in dim apprehension, it has to come from a sphere really above that of the Seraphim. For the Elohim to raise their creative activity to these dizzy heights, for them to obtain help from this source, something had to happen of which we must try to grasp the significance. They had, so to say, to grow beyond themselves. They had to acquire a greater ability than was theirs during the preliminary stages. To crown their work they had to unfold still higher powers. The Elohim, as a group, had to grow beyond themselves. Let us try to get an idea of how such a thing could happen. Let us start with an illustration from everyday life, to help us to form some idea of this. Take the development of a human being.

When we look at a tiny child on the threshold of earthly life, we know that a unitary consciousness

has not yet been developed in him. It is only after some time that a child even utters the “I” which holds consciousness together. It is only then that the contents of his soul-life become knit together in a conscious unity. The human being grows to a higher stage through the bringing together of activities which in the baby are still decentralised. Thus, in the human being this concentration signifies an advance to a higher level. We can think of the progressive development of the Elohim as analogous to this. During the preparatory stages of man's development they practised a certain activity. This activity has taught them something, has helped to raise them to a higher stage. They have now acquired a certain unified consciousness *as a group*. That is as much as to say that they have not remained simply a group but have become a unity, and a unity possessing real being. What I am here saying is extremely important. Hitherto I have only been able to say that the several Elohim each had his own special capacity. Each of them was able to contribute something to the common resolve, the common picture of the human being they wished

to form; and at the same time this human being was only an idea, upon which they could co-operate. To begin with, it was not real. Something real was first brought into existence after they had created the common product. But in the course of this work they themselves developed to a higher stage, developed their own unity to a reality, so that they were no longer seven, but a sevenfold whole. We can now speak of an "Elohimhood," which reveals itself in a sevenfold way. This unity of the Elohim had first to come into being. It is something to which the Elohim work themselves up. The Bible is aware of this. The Bible is acquainted with the idea that the Elohim were first separate members of a group, and that they then form themselves into a unity; that to begin with they co-operate as members of a group, and later become directed out of a unified organism. This real unity, in which the Elohim act as the organs of a body, the Bible calls Jahve-Elohim. [1] That gives us a much deeper conception of Jahve, of Jehovah, than has so far been possible. That is why the Bible begins by speaking simply of the Elohim, and then, when the Elohim themselves

have reached a higher stage, when they have advanced to a unity, it speaks of Jahve-Elohim. That is the deeper cause of the sudden emergence of the name of Jahve at the end of the work of creation.

This shows how necessary it is to have recourse to occult sources if one wishes to understand things. What does the biblical criticism of the nineteenth century make of this? It says: "We find in one passage the name Elohim, in another the name Jahve. Clearly the two passages derive from different religious traditions; we have to distinguish between what has come down from a people who worshipped the Elohim, and what has been handed down by a people who worshipped Jahve. And whoever wrote the account of the Creation which we possess merged the two traditions. We must separate them again." This line of research has gone so far that today we have Rainbow Bibles, with what is said to derive from the one source printed in blue, and what comes from the other in red. There are such Bibles! Only, unfortunately, the division has to be so made that

part of a sentence has to be blue and the other part red, because the first clause is said to derive from one people, and the second from the other. It is astonishing that the main and subordinate clauses should fit so beautifully together that it only needed a collator to join up the two traditions! Immense industry has been expended upon this biblical exegesis of the nineteenth century, perhaps more than on any other scientific or historical research; and it fills us with melancholy and a deep sense of tragedy. The very thing which should enlighten humanity upon the most spiritual matters has lost its connection with spiritual sources.

It is as if someone were to say: "Of course, if we compare the passage where Ariel speaks in the second part of Faust with the doggerel in the first part, the style is quite different. It is not possible that the same man could have written both, and Goethe must therefore be a mythical figure." Through being cut off from occult sources, the fruit of this immense labour, this devoted industry, is worth just about as much as the conclusion of

someone who denied the existence of Goethe because he could not believe that two such different things as the style of *Faust* in its first and second parts could emanate from the same man. Here we get a glimpse into one of the deep tragedies of human life; here we see how necessary it is that minds should again turn to the sources of spiritual life. Spiritual knowledge is only possible when men again seek for the living spirit. They *will* do so, for to do so is an irresistible urge of the human soul. And the whole strength of our anthroposophical inspiration rests upon our confidence that there is something in the human soul which draws men's hearts to seek once more for a connection with spiritual sources and which will lead them to understand the true basis of religious documents. Let us imbue ourselves with this confidence and we shall reap the true fruits of a theme which should guide us into the spiritual life.

Notes:

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יְהוָה אֱלֹהִים

LECTURE VII

IN our efforts to understand existence it is our practice to trace the course of some aspect of its development up to the present time, and we have had many opportunities of becoming familiar with the idea that everything we perceive around us is in course of evolution. We must get used to applying the idea of evolution more widely, we must apply it in spheres not usually associated with it today — for instance, we must apply it to the life of the soul. We probably do recognise it as it manifests itself outwardly in the life of the individual between birth and death. But so far as humanity as a whole is concerned, people immediately think of evolution as an ascent from the condition of the lower animals and draw the conclusion — even from the standpoint of modern knowledge a somewhat fanciful one — that the

human has evolved out of the animal — as if the higher could, without more ado, evolve out of the lower! It is of course not my task in this cycle to show in detail, as I have often done, that our present consciousness has undergone a far-reaching evolution, that the kind of consciousness, the kind of soul-life we have today, was preceded by another form of consciousness. We have often described this earlier form as a kind of lower clairvoyant consciousness. Our modern consciousness furnishes us with mental images of outer objects by means of external perception. But that other earlier consciousness can best be studied if we look back to the Moon evolution.

The most outstanding difference between the evolution of the Moon and that of our present earth is that the old form of clairvoyance, a kind of picture-consciousness, has been superseded by the present-day object-consciousness. I have for many years been calling attention to this, and years ago I was able to give information out of the Akasha Chronicle on the subject of evolution. It appeared in the early essays of the magazine *Lucifer-Gnosis*.

[1] There I pointed out that the old, dreamlike picture-consciousness which characterised our own nature in former times has developed into our earth-consciousness, into what today gives us consciousness of external things, consciousness of things outside us in space as contrasted with what we ourselves are in our inner being. This ability to distinguish between external objects and our own inner life is what characterises our present state of consciousness. When we have an object in front of us — let us say a rose — we say: “That rose is there in space! It is separated from us; we stand at a different spot from it.” We perceive the rose, and make a mental image of it. The mental image is within us, the rose is outside. The distinction between outer and inner is the mark of our present-day consciousness. Consciousness on the Moon was not like that. Beings with the Moon-consciousness made no such distinction. Suppose that when you looked at the rose you were not conscious that the rose was outside, and that you were making a mental image of it, but that you felt “The real being of this rose which hovers there in space is not confined to the space which it

occupies, but its being extends outward into space, and is actually in me.” Indeed you could go further. Suppose that when you looked at the sun you did not feel that the sun was above you and that you were below, but felt that while you were forming a mental image of the sun it was within you; suppose your consciousness was taking hold of it in amore or less spiritual way! Then there would be no distinction between outer and inner. If you can make that clear to yourselves, you will have grasped the outstanding characteristic of consciousness as it was throughout the Moon evolution.

Another quality of this consciousness was that it was pictorial; things did not appear directly as objects, but as images, just as today dreams often unfold as imagery. For example, a dream can take its course in such a way that a fire external to ourselves appears as a being radiating light. It was somewhat in this way that consciousness on the Moon perceived things. It was a pictorial consciousness, at the same time permeated with the quality of inwardness.

There was yet another essential in which the consciousness of that time differed from that of our present time. It did not work in such a way that outer objects would have been there at all as they are for our present earth-consciousness. For the consciousness of the Moon period what we today call our environment, what we perceive in the vegetable, the mineral, the human kingdoms as sense-objects, was not there. What was there — on a lower, dreamlike level — was something similar to what there is in the soul today when the power of seership awakens, when conscious clairvoyance awakens. The first awakening of clairvoyant consciousness is of such a nature that to begin with it does not extend to external Beings. This is a source of countless deceptions to those who are training themselves esoterically to develop clairvoyance.

Such a training progresses by stages. There is a first stage which unfolds in various ways. In it the student sees many things around him. But he would make a great mistake if he were straightway to think that what he sees around him, so to say in

spiritual space, is also spiritual reality. Johannes Thomasius in my Mystery Play goes through this stage of astral clairvoyance. Let me remind you of the scenes which rise before his soul as he sits in meditation down-stage, and feels in his soul the dawn of the spiritual world. Pictures arise in his soul, and the first one is that the Spirit of the Elements brings before him persons whom he has previously known in life. In the Play, Johannes Thomasius has come to know Professor Capesius and Doctor Strader. He knew them on the physical plane, and there formed certain impressions of them. Then, when after his great sorrow his clairvoyant capacity breaks through, he sees them again. He sees them in remarkable forms. He sees Capesius as a young man, as he was at the age of twenty-five or twenty-six, and not as he is at the moment when he, Johannes Thomasius, sits meditating; and he sees Doctor Strader as he will be in his present incarnation when he is old. This and many other pictures pass through the soul of Johannes Thomasius. These pictures which are really living in the soul through meditation can only be represented in the play as happening on

the stage. It would be quite wrong for Johannes Thomasius to regard this as deception. The only right attitude towards all this would be to say to himself that he cannot yet know how far this is reality or deception. He does not know whether what the pictures show is an external spiritual reality or not; that is, he does not know whether it is something inscribed in the Akashic record or whether he has expanded his own self to a world. It could be either, and he must recognise that fact. It is only from the moment when the Devachan consciousness begins, when in Devachan he perceives the spiritual reality of a being whom he knows on the physical plane — Maria — that he is able to look back again and to discriminate between reality and mere picture-consciousness. Thus you can see that man has to pass through a stage in the course of his esoteric development in which he is surrounded by pictures, but is unable to distinguish between what is a manifestation of spiritual reality and what is merely picture. The scenes of the Mystery Play of course were intended to express spiritual realities. The appearance of Professor Capesius is a real picture

of the young Capesius, as it is inscribed in the Akashic record, and the appearance of Doctor Strader is the real Strader as he will be in his old age. They are intended to be real in the play, only Johannes Thomasius does not know it.

The stage of consciousness I have just described was experienced on the Moon, only at a lower, more dreamlike level, so that no faculty of discrimination was possible. The ability to discriminate only began later. You must try to get a thorough grasp of what I am telling you. Let us bear in mind that the clairvoyant lives in a kind of picture-consciousness. But during the Moon period the pictures which arose were in the main quite different from the objects of our earthly consciousness; and the same thing applies today in the early stages of clairvoyance. To begin with, the clairvoyant does not see spiritual things at all; he sees pictures, and the question is what do these pictures signify? In the first stages of clairvoyance they do not express real spiritual Beings, but a kind of organic consciousness. The experience is a pictorial representation, a projection into space, of

what is actually taking place in himself. To take an actual example, when the clairvoyant begins to develop these forces in himself, he can have the experience of seeing two luminous globes far outside in space. He sees pictures of two globes in luminous colour. If he were then to think to himself “there outside me are two Beings,” the probability is that he would be quite wrong; at any rate that would be the case to begin with. What is happening is that his clairvoyance is projecting outwards into space forces which are at work in himself, and he sees them as two globes. And these two globes could represent what is at work in his astral body to produce within him the power of sight in his two eyes. This power of sight can be projected outwards in the form of two globes. Thus what is actually to be seen is an inner faculty showing itself as an external phenomenon in astral space. It would be a very great mistake for such an experience to be taken to herald the external presence of spiritual Beings.

It would be a still greater error if in these early stages by some means or other it were to happen

that voices were heard, and these voices taken as inspirations from outside. That is the greatest error into which one can fall. Such an experience can hardly be more than an echo of an inner process; and while what appears in picture form, in colour, usually represents fairly pure inner processes, voices as a rule manifest lower and rather worthless elements of soul-life. It is best for anyone who begins to hear voices to cultivate the greatest distrust of them. The early stages of these imaginal representations should always be received with the greatest caution. It is a kind of organic consciousness, a projection outwards into space of one's own inner being. Such an organic consciousness was quite normal during the Moon evolution. The human being at that stage scarcely perceived anything except what was happening to himself.

I have often called attention to an important saying of Goethe's: "The eye has been formed by the light for the light." This saying should be taken quite seriously. All man's organs have been formed by his environment, out of his environment. It is a

superficial philosophy which stresses only one side of this truth, that without the eye man could not perceive light. For the other important aspect of the truth is that without light the eye could never have developed; and in the same way without sound there would have been no ear. Looked at from a deeper standpoint Kantianism is very superficial, because it only gives half the truth. The light which weaves and floods throughout the cosmos — that is the cause of the organs of vision. During the Moon period, the main task of the Beings who took part in the development of our universe was the construction of our organs. First these organs have to be built up; then they are able to perceive. Our present objective consciousness is due to the fact that organs have first been formed for it. The sense organs, as purely physical organs, had already been formed on Saturn, with the eye somewhat like the photographer's camera obscura. Purely physical apparatuses like that can perceive nothing. They are constructed according to purely physical laws. In the Moon period the organs acquired an inner life. Thus on Saturn the eye was

so formed that it was merely a physical apparatus; at the Moon stage, through the sunlight which fell upon it from without, it was transformed into an organ of perception, an organ of consciousness. The essence of this activity during the Moon evolution is that the organs were, so to say, drawn forth from the Beings. During the earth period light works essentially on the plants, maintains plant development. We see the outward result of this activity of light in our flora. During the Moon evolution light did not act in this way, it drew forth our organs; and what was perceived by man at that time was this work upon his own organs. He perceived it in the form of pictures which seemed, it is true, to fill cosmic space. The pictures seemed to be spread out in space. In reality they merely represented the work of elementary existence upon the human organs. During the Moon period what man perceived was his own inner becoming, he perceived this work upon himself, saw the way he was fashioning himself, the way he was evolving his perceiving eye out of his own being. Thus the outer world was an inner world, because the entire outer world was working upon his inner being.

And he made no distinction between outer and inner. He did not perceive the sun as external to himself. He did not separate the sun from himself, but within himself he felt his eyes coming into existence. And this active coming into existence of his eyes expanded for him into a pictorial perception which filled space. That was how he perceived the sun, but it was an inner process. The characteristic thing about the Moon-consciousness was that one was surrounded by a world of pictures, but these pictures represented an inner development, an inner formation of soul. Thus the Moon-man was enveloped in the astral and felt his own development as an external world. Today it would be an illness to perceive this inner development as an outer world, not to distinguish these pictures from the world outside, to perceive the outside world merely as a reflection of one's own growth. During the Moon evolution it was normal. For instance, man perceived in his own being the work of those Beings who later became the Elohim. He perceived the activity of the Elohim somewhat as today you might perceive your blood flowing into you! It was inside him,

but it was reflected in pictures from without.

But on the Moon such a consciousness was the only one possible. For what happens upon our earth has to take place in harmony with the whole cosmos. A consciousness such as man has upon the earth, with this distinction between outer and inner, with this perception that real objects are there outside us, and that our inwardness exists alongside them, called for the whole evolutionary transition from the Moon to the earth, called for an entirely different kind of cleavage in our cosmic system. During the Moon evolution, there was no separation between Moon and earth, as there is today. We have to think of the Moon as the present earth would be if the moon were still united with it. So all the other planets, including the sun, were quite differently formed; and under the conditions which then obtained only a picture-consciousness was possible. It was only after our whole cosmos had assumed the form it now has, encompassing the earth, that our present objective consciousness could develop.

Such a consciousness as man has on earth today was withheld from him until the time of earth evolution. Not only was man without it, but none of the other Beings whom we speak of as belonging to this or that hierarchy had it. It would be superficial to think, because the angels underwent their human stage on the Moon, that they must therefore have had on the Moon such a consciousness as man has today on the earth. It was not so, and this is what distinguishes them from men — that they experienced their humanity in another consciousness. An exact repetition of the past never takes place. Each evolutionary impulse happens once only, and happens for its own sake and not for the sake of repeating something. Thus to produce what we know today as human, earthly consciousness all the processes which have actually brought this earth about were needed — for that purpose man had to be there *as man*. It was impossible for such a form of consciousness to develop at an earlier stage of evolution. To us an object is something outside us; earlier, all the Beings of whom we can speak had a consciousness which made no distinction between

outer and inner, so that it would have been nonsense for any of them to say: "Something is standing before me." Even the Elohim could not say that; they had no such experience. They could only say: "We live and weave in the cosmos; we create, and in creating are aware of this our creation; objects do not stand before us, do not appear to be *before* us." To say "objects appear before us" conveys a situation in which we are confronted by something real formed in an external space from which we ourselves are separated. This did not come about even for the Elohim until the time of earth evolution. During the Moon evolution, when these Elohim felt themselves weaving and working in the light which streamed from the Sun upon the Moon, they might have said to themselves: "We feel ourselves to be within this light, we feel how with this light we sink into the beings who live as men on the Moon; we speed through space with this light." But they could never have said: "We see this light outside us." There was no such thing on the Moon. That was a completely new earth experience.

When at a certain stage in the Genesis account the momentous words occur *And God said, Let there be light*, it meant that something new had happened, that the Elohim did not merely feel themselves to be flowing with the light, but that light streamed back to them from objects, that objects appeared to them from without. This is expressed by the writer of the Genesis account when to the words *And God said, Let there be light* he adds: *And God saw the light*. In this ancient document there is nothing superfluous, nothing meaningless. If only men could learn, among much else that this document could teach them, to ascribe to it nothing that is not pregnant with meaning, to take nothing in it as an empty phrase! The writer of the Genesis account wrote nothing unnecessary, nothing by way of commonplace embellishment to enhance the beauty of the creation of light; he does not make the Elohim say anything like this: "We see the light and are very pleased with ourselves that we have made it so well." What the brief sentence emphasises, what it signifies, is simply that something new has come about.

Moreover it does not say merely *And God saw the light*, but that He saw that it was beautiful — or good. [2] Note that in the Hebrew tongue the distinction between “beautiful” and “good” was not made as it is today. The Hebrew language has the same word for good and for beautiful. What is the significance of this? In ancient Sanskrit, even in German, there is still an echo of what it meant. The word “beautiful” covers all words in all languages which mean that an inner spiritual element reveals itself in an external form. To be beautiful means that something inward is externally manifest. Today when we use the word “beauty” we are thinking most truly when we hold that an inner spiritual reality in the beautiful object is represented on its surface in physical form. We say that something is beautiful if the spiritual, so to say, shines through what is externally sense-perceptible. When does a marble sculpture become a thing of beauty? When its form arouses the illusion that spirit indwells it. Beauty is the manifestation of the spiritual through the external. Thus when in Genesis we come to the words *God saw the light*, we can say that they convey the

specific quality of earth evolution; also that what could formerly only be experienced subjectively now manifests itself from without; that the spirit presents itself in its external manifestation. Thus we can paraphrase the biblical words by saying “and the Elohim experienced the consciousness that something in which they themselves formerly existed confronted them as an external phenomenon; and they realised that the spirit was behind this appearance and came to expression in the external.” This is the significance of the word “beautiful” or “good.” Wordy explanations will not help us to understand the Genesis account, but only diligent search for the secrets which are really hidden behind the words. Then research will yield rich fruits; whereas all too many interpretations are nothing but tiresome pedantry.

Let us go a step further. We have seen that the characteristic features of the Moon evolution were only able to come about through the separation of the Sun from the Moon. Then we have seen that during the earth evolution it again became necessary for the sun to separate off from the

earth; we have seen that a duality is necessary for a life of full consciousness. The earth element had to withdraw. But in such a withdrawal something else is also involved; the elementary conditions of the moon nature and of the sun nature change, become different. If you make a study of our present sun, even from a purely physical aspect you are obliged to say to yourselves: “The conditions which we have on earth and which we call solid and liquid are not to be found in the physical sun.” The most you can say is that the sun still condenses to the gaseous state. This is recognised by modern physics. Such a separation of elementary conditions comes about through the severing of what was previously a unity.

We have seen that the earth develops in such a way that a gradual densification downward takes place from warmth to solid, to earth, and that what is above as elementary existence light-ether, sound-ether, life-ether — seems to press inwards from without. But this description does not fit the part which goes out as the sun. It would be better therefore to say that there are seven states of

elementary existence. The first, the most rarefied state, which constitutes and brings about life; then what we call number, or sound-ether; then light-ether; then warmth-ether; then we have air, or the gaseous element, the watery element and finally the earthy or solid. It is in the earth that we have to look mainly for the elements up as far as warmth. Warmth permeates the earth, whereas the earth only shares in light in so far as the Beings in its environment — or if you like the bodies in its environment — take part in the life of the earth. Light streams upon the earth from the sun. If we wish to locate the three higher elementary states — light-ether, the ether of spiritual sound, and life-ether — we must place them in the sphere of the sun. In the earth we have to look for the solid, fluid and gaseous elements; warmth is shared by both earth and sun.

The Sun separated off for the first time during the Moon evolution. It was then that the light was for the first time active from without, but not then as light. I have just pointed out that the sentence in Genesis which reads *And God saw the light ...*

could not have been spoken in respect of the Moon evolution. There one would have had to say that the Elohim speeded through space with the light, were in the light, but saw it not. Just as today one swims in water and moves forward in it without actually seeing it, so one did not see the light, but light was a bearer of the work in cosmic space. It was with the coming of earth evolution that light began to *appear*, to be reflected by objects.

It was natural that this, which held good for light on the Moon, should itself reach a higher stage of development during earth evolution. It is therefore to be expected that what applied to light on the Moon should during earth evolution apply to the sound-ether. This would involve that what we call spiritual sound was not perceived by the Elohim as reverberating back to them in the manner of the reflected light. Thus, if Genesis wished to convey that evolution was advancing from the activity of the light-ether to that of sound-ether, it would have to say something like this: “And the Elohim saw the light in the developing earth, and saw that it was beautiful.” But it could not go on in the same

way to say: “And the Elohim during this phase perceived the sound-ether”; it would have to say “they lived and wove in it.” Nor could it be said of the second “day” of creation that the Elohim perceived the stir which separated the elements above from those below; it could not be said of this work of the Elohim that they *perceived*. The words “perceive” and “beautiful” would have had to be omitted. Then the description would correspond with what can be observed through Spiritual Science.

Thus the seer who wrote the Genesis account had, when describing the second “day,” to leave out the words: *And God saw ...*

Now look at Genesis. On the first “day” it reads: *And God saw the light, that it was good*. On the second day of creation, after the end of the first day, it says: *And God said, Let there be a firmament in the midst of the waters, and let it divide the waters from the waters ... and it was so. And God called the firmament Heaven. And the evening and the morning were the second day*. The sentence *And God saw ...*, which we find on the

first day, is left out on the second day. Genesis gives the facts as we should expect them to be given from what we have been able to observe by spiritual scientific method.

Here again is a knotty point of which the commentators of the nineteenth century have not known what to make. There have been commentators who said: “What does it matter if the second time the words are omitted? The writer just forgot them.” Men should learn that Genesis not only records nothing irrelevant, but also omits nothing relevant. The writer has forgotten nothing. There is a profound reason why on the second day of creation these words are not to be found. Here we have another example — I could quote many — of what fills us with immense reverence for such ancient records.

We could learn much from these ancient writers, who really needed to take no oath, but followed of their own accord the rule of telling the whole truth, and nothing but the truth which they knew. They felt through and through that every word that stands there must be sacred to us, and equally that

nothing essential must be omitted.

We have now gained an insight into the composition of what are called the first and second “days” of creation. Anyone who discovers through spiritual investigation what lies behind things might well say to himself, as he turns to his Bible, “It would be marvellous, it would be astounding, if these intimate details which can be discovered by scrupulous spiritual investigation should be corroborated by the words of the ancient seer who took part in the making of Genesis.” And when he finds that the astounding thing is true, a wonderful feeling comes over him — a feeling such as should indeed penetrate human souls if they are once more to appreciate the holiness of this ancient document.

Notes:

[1] Many of these articles were subsequently published in English in book form as *Atlantis and Lemuria* (Anthroposophical Publishing Co., 1923).

[2] The English Authorised Version uses the word “good.”

LECTURE VIII

IN the course of these lectures we have described how the earlier, preparatory stages of the Saturn, Sun and Moon evolutions have entered into the development of our earth. We must of course always bear in mind that what concerns us most of all, what is most important, is the development of man himself. We know that man is, so to say, the first-born of our whole planetary evolution. If we look back to Saturn, we are struck by the fact that in this state of weaving warmth we can speak only of the first rudiments of physical man, and that as yet nothing of what surrounds us today in animal, vegetable and mineral kingdoms existed. These were added after the human kingdom was already there. Hence we have to ask ourselves how the story of creation according to Genesis is to be reconciled with the facts of human evolution.

We shall soon see that everything which today we seek to learn through spiritual investigation is fully confirmed. On a superficial reading of Genesis it might seem that man emerged for the first time as if suddenly fired from a pistol on the sixth day. Yet we know that the human kingdom is the all-important one, that the other kingdoms are, as it were, by-products of human incarnation. So we ask ourselves where the human being is to be found in the days before the sixth. If the earth develops as a kind of recapitulation of the Saturn, Sun and Moon evolutions we should expect to find the human being there all the time, we should expect to find him long before the sixth day. How is it that we find no earlier mention of man in the Genesis account?

First of all, let us observe that Genesis, when beginning to speak of the creation of man, uses the word “Adam,” [1] and in the ancient Hebrew priestly language the word “Adam” does correspond more or less to our word “man.” But we must learn to understand more exactly what “Adam” means. The word called forth in the soul

of the Hebrew sage a mental picture which can perhaps be rendered in English as “the earthy one.” Thus man is pre-eminently the *earth* being, the consummation of all *earth* existence, the final fruit of *earth* incarnation. But everything which comes finally to maturity in the fruit is already inherent in the nature of the plant. We shall not discover man in the earlier “days” of creation, unless we are clear that in reality it is not the physical man that precedes the soul-spiritual, but vice versa. We have to think of the physical, earthly man of today much in the same way as we think of a small quantity of water which we cool down and allow to solidify into ice. We have to think of the soul-spiritual man as solidifying, condensing to earthly man, through the work of the Elohim on the sixth day of creation, just as water freezes into ice. Thus progress up to the sixth day consisted in a condensation of the soul-spiritual part of man to the solid earth man. On the preceding “days” we must not expect to find man in the region of what has been cast off and is developing supersensibly according to appropriate physical laws; we must expect to find him in a

soul-spiritual condition. Thus when we say in the words of Genesis that on the first day there were present the inner mobile energy and the outwardly manifest, we should not on that first day expect to find man in the earth element, but as a soul-spiritual being in the periphery of the earth. As a soul-spiritual being he is being prepared for his earthly existence.

Today I want to correlate some of the findings of Spiritual Science with the Genesis account. When Genesis tells us that through cosmic musing the two complexes of inner stimulation and outward manifestation arise, what is it which is being prepared in the very first rudiments of man? When the spirit of the Elohim weaves and broods through these complexes, what part of man is in course of preparation? It is what in spiritual scientific terminology we call the sentient soul, which today we have to look upon as something inward. That is what is being prepared on the first day of creation up to the point where it says: *Let there be light; and there was light*. Within all this there lies in the spiritual periphery the sentient

soul of man. To put it more clearly, we look for the sentient soul to begin with in the circumference of the earth, and we place it in the time usually described as the first “day” of creation. Thus in the circumference of the earth, where the Elohim and the Beings ministering to them unfold their work, we have to see a human soul-spiritual present in the spiritual atmosphere somewhat in the same way as today we see clouds in the airy atmosphere; and this is the human sentient soul. Then the evolution of man makes a further advance. On the second “day” of creation we have in the circumference of the earth the refining of the sentient soul into the intellectual or mind-soul. When the sound-ether strikes into the developing earth, when the upper masses of matter separate from the lower, there is, as part of the upper sphere, weaving in the upper sphere, a man consisting entirely of the rudiments of the sentient and the intellectual or mind-soul.

Then on the third “day” we have to think of man as advancing to the stage of the consciousness soul. On this third day, down below on the earth

under the influence of the life-ether, verdant life unfolds in species form; the earth brings forth the foundations of plant life — of course, only supersensibly perceptible — and up above in the ether there weaves what we call the consciousness soul, together with the sentient and the intellectual or mind-souls.

Thus the soul-spiritual man hovers in the periphery of the developing earth. He is as it were within the substance of the several spiritual Beings. So far he has no independent existence. It is as if he were being fashioned as an organ within the Elohim, the Archai and so on — as though he were in their bodies as part of them. Hence it is natural that it is of these Beings that we are told, for at this stage of earth development, they alone are actual individualities! To describe their lot is to describe the lot of the rudimentary human beings as well. But you can easily see that if man is one day to people the earth, something like a gradual densification of the human being has to come about. This soul-spiritual element must gradually be clothed in a body. At the end of what is called

in the Bible the third “day” of creation we have the rudiments of a soul-spiritual man which today we should call the consciousness soul, intellectual or mind-soul, and sentient soul. These have to be provided with an outer garment. Within this soul-spiritual, man has next to acquire the garment of the astral body.

Let us try to realise what this means. When today can we study the laws of the astral body, isolated from the physical body? Our astral bodies are separated from us when we are asleep, though the astral form is now quite different from what it was in the time of which Genesis speaks. When man sleeps he leaves his etheric and physical bodies lying in bed, and he himself is in his astral body, which hides within it his ego.

Remember the many things which I have told you in the course of years about the peculiar life of the astral body during sleep. From my *Occult Science* you will recall that when the astral body is outside the physical and etheric bodies, currents go out from it, it begins to make connections with its cosmic surroundings. When in the morning you

come back from the sleeping to the waking state you have absorbed strengthening forces from the whole cosmos. During the night our astral body has been united, through its effluence, with the entire cosmos. It has been united with all the planetary Beings associated with our earth. It has radiated its effluence to Mercury, Mars, Jupiter and so on, and in these planetary Beings are the strengthening forces which give to the astral body what it needs to enable us on its return to continue our waking life in the physical and etheric bodies. During the night our astral bodies are diffused and enlarged to a cosmic existence. The clairvoyant sees the astral body quit the physical body when the human being falls asleep. But in point of fact that is an inadequate description. The astral body winds its way in spiral form out of the physical body. It moves as a cloud in spiral form. What we see is only the beginning of the currents which emanate from the astral body. They go out into cosmic space and gather forces, they drink in the forces of the planets. And if anyone tells you that the astral body is what can be seen by a clairvoyant hovering like a cloud in the vicinity of

the physical body, it is not true. During the night the astral body is poured out over the whole of our solar system. During sleep it is united with the planetary Beings. That is the very reason why we call it the astral body. None of the interpretations of the term “astral body” coined in the Middle Ages is correct. We speak of the astral body because during sleep it is in inner union with the starry world, the astral world, because it rests in the world of the stars and absorbs their forces.

When you grasp this fact, which is confirmed by spiritual investigation, you will say to yourselves: “Then surely the first influences which formed this astral body must have streamed to man from the astral world, the world of the stars, and the world of the stars must have been present in the developing earth!” Thus when we say that on the fourth day of creation what had hitherto been soul-spiritual clothed itself in the laws and forces of the astral body, then on that same fourth day the stars, the *astra*, must have unfolded their activity in the periphery of the earth.

And the Genesis account confirms this. In the passage on the fourth day of creation, Genesis gives a description of the clothing of man — man still in the spiritual or astral periphery of the earth — with the astral body, with the activity of the starry world, which belongs primarily to our earth. And this description agrees with what we should express as “the human astral body is formed in accordance with its laws.” Thus here too we find a deeper meaning in complete harmony with what clairvoyant investigation has today to tell of modern man. We shall see that at the time of which Genesis speaks the astral body was not the same as our own astral bodies are during the night; but its laws were the same, and the activity which it developed was the same.

We shall expect that during the next period, which Genesis calls the fifth “day” of creation, a still further densification will take place. Man still remains a supersensible etheric being. But a further densification does take place within the etheric. Man still does not make contact with the earth, he still belongs to the more spiritual-etheric

circumference of the earth. Here we touch upon something which it is extraordinarily important for us to understand for the sake of the whole development of man in his relationship with the earth. When we turn to the kingdom next to man, to the animal kingdom, a question may arise which we have often touched upon before as to why animals become animals, and man becomes man. That man has evolved from the animal kingdom, as the crude materialism of today imagines, could not even be accepted by superficial ratiocination if it really understood itself. But nevertheless if we study the course of the earth's development, we have to admit that animals made their appearance before man became visible as an earth being. Before man could become man upon the earth, appropriate conditions had to be prepared for his densification. Suppose that man had become dense enough to become an earth being, such as he is today, on the fifth day of creation! If he had descended to the solid earth at that time, he could not have acquired the form and substance which in fact he did acquire. Earth conditions were not yet ripe enough to give man this form. Man had to

wait in the spiritual realm and to allow the development of the earth to proceed by itself, because it could not yet give him the conditions suited to his earthly life. Man had first to mature within a psycho-spiritual sphere, a more etheric sphere. Had he not delayed his descent to the earth, he would have had to assume an animal form. It is in fact because the soul-spiritual being, the group-soul, of these animal forms, descended when the earth was not yet ready for the human form, when it could not provide the necessary conditions for the earthly human form, that animals became animals. Man had to wait above in the spiritual realm. The beings which became animals descended too soon for human incarnation. At the time of the fifth day of creation the earth was filled with air and water. Man could not fashion an earthly body for himself by descending into that condition. The animals, the group-souls of the animals, who did descend into it became beings of the air, and beings of the water. Thus while these group-souls were clothing themselves in bodies derived from the substances of air and water, man had to wait in the spiritual

realm, in order to be able later to assume human form.

What would have happened if man had descended into dense matter on the fifth day? His physical humanity would not have had the forces bestowed upon it which came to him through the elevation of the Elohim into a unity. We have already spoken of this unifying of the Elohim and have said that Genesis indicates it in a most wonderful way by speaking first of the Elohim and later of Jahve-Elohim. We have said that the characteristic of the Elohim was that they wove in the element of warmth. Warmth was their element; it was, as it were, the body through which they manifested themselves. When at the end of the period of development described in Genesis the Elohim had advanced so much further that we can speak of a unitary consciousness, a Jahve-Elohim, a change in their nature was involved. This change followed the same principle as changes in other hierarchical Beings. You will remember that I spoke of the “body” of the Thrones. We have said that at the beginning of our planetary evolution their body

was sacrificed to the warmth-element of Saturn. We have also said that during the Sun evolution the body of the Thrones was to be found in the element of air and in the Moon evolution in the element of water, and on the earth in the earth-element, the solid. For the Thrones this condensation of their nature further and further from the state of warmth to that of earth betokened a kind of promotion.

What was it that had to take place in order that the Elohim likewise should rise to a higher stage as the fruit of their creative activity? In accordance with the laws which govern such things they had to progress to the next degree of densification. Just as in primeval times, in the transition from Saturn to Sun, the Thrones progressed from the state of warmth to that of air, so we should expect the Elohim too, in attaining their unified consciousness, to progress from warmth to air. That, however, did not happen on the fifth day, but only at the end of the series of events described in the Genesis account of the creation. Had *man* been permitted to descend into the finer element of air

on the fifth day, it would have happened to him as to the other beings who sought their bodily nature in the element of air. They became animals of the air, because they could not be given the requisite strength, the power of the Elohim risen to the stage of Jahve-Elohim, to enable them to fulfil the meaning of earth existence. Thus man had to wait. He was not permitted to adopt the air as his element. When the creatures of the air descended, he had to wait until the Elohim had become Jahve-Elohim. Only then could he be given the Jahve-Elohim strength. He had to be bodied forth in the weaving of Jahve-Elohim, in the air, but he was not to take this elementary airy existence into himself until he could receive it from Jahve-Elohim. This the Genesis account conveys in a very subtle way; what it virtually says is that man grew ripe in a more spiritual-etheric existence, and only sought denser embodiment after the Elohim had advanced to the stage of Jahve-Elohim, after Jahve-Elohim was able to form the earthly nature of man by breathing into him the air. It was the efflux of the Elohim themselves, now grown to Jahve-Elohim, which streamed into man with the

air.

There again we have a description in Genesis which wonderfully accords with the spiritual investigation of today. And in Genesis we find a theory of evolution compared with which the proud doctrines of today are mere fantasy. For Genesis guides us to the inwardness of creation, shows us what has to take place in the supersensible before man can advance to sensible existence.

Thus while the other beings had already condensed physically in the region of air and water; man had still to remain in etheric existence, and it was in fact his condensation to the stage of the etheric body that took place in the period alluded to as the fifth day of creation. On the fifth day we still do not find man among the physical earth beings. It is not until the sixth day that we find man actually among the earth beings. It is then that he is received by the developing earth; what we call the physical body came into existence on the sixth day of creation.

But we must still emphasise that it would be quite wrong to believe that you would have been able to see with your eyes or touch with your hands the man who came into existence on the sixth day. If a man with the eyes of today had been at all possible at that time, he would not have been able to perceive the man who then came into existence. The man of today is too much inclined to think materialistically. Hence he at once thinks of the newly created man on the sixth day as a being just like himself. Man was certainly there in a physical form — but then even the vibrations of heat are physical. If you come into a space and find there differentiated currents of warmth not so dense as gas, you must still call that physical existence, and there was such physical existence on Saturn, even though only in the form of warmth. Thus man on the sixth day was not to be found in solid fleshly form. He was to be found in physical form, as an earth being, but only in the first manifestation of the physical, as a man of warmth. When that event occurred, so beautifully expressed in the words *And God said, Let us make man*, anyone sensitive to warmth would have perceived certain

differentiations in the substance of warmth. If he had walked over the earth, which was at that time covered with vegetation and animal life in air and water — all at the species stage — he might have said to himself: “Strange! in certain places I get impressions of warmth — not of anything that has reached a gaseous condition — pure warmth-impressions.” There are differentiations of warmth in the periphery of the earth, beings of warmth flit hither and thither. Man was as yet not a gaseous being; he consisted only of warmth. Try to think away all the solid part of you, all the fluid, all the gaseous element, and to imagine only that part of the man you are today which pulsates in the warmth of your blood. Imagine your blood-heat apart from anything else, and then you have what came into being when the Elohim spoke the creative word: *Let us make man*. And the next stage of densification did not come until after the days of creation; the influx of what Jahve-Elohim was able to give, the inbreathing of air, did not take place until after the sixth day of creation.

Man will not understand his own origin until he makes up his mind to think of his descent as follows. At the beginning of the development of the earth there was a soul-spiritual condition; then came an astral condition; then an etheric condition, and then came the physical states, first warmth and then air. Even as regards the point of time when, after the six “days” of creation, we are told *And the Lord God ... breathed into his nostrils the breath of life*, unless we think of man at that moment as consisting only of warmth and air — so long as we believe that a man of flesh and blood was already there — we have not understood our own origin. The coarser is derived from the finer, not the finer from the coarser. It is alien to present-day consciousness to think in this way, but it is the truth.

When we have grasped this, then we shall understand why it is that in so many accounts of the creation the incarnation of man is represented as a descent from the periphery of the earth. When the Bible itself, after the “days” of creation, speaks of Paradise we must look for the deeper meaning

behind this, and only Spiritual Science will enable us to understand the truth. To anyone who knows the truth, it is really very odd that the commentators should have argued as to whether Paradise was situated on earth at this spot or that from which mankind spread abroad. It is only too clear in many accounts of creation — including the one in the Bible — that Paradise was not situated upon earthly soil, that it was lifted above the earth, was so to say in the heights of the clouds, and that while man lived in Paradise he remained a being of warmth and air. At that time man did not actually walk about the earth on two legs; that is a materialistic fantasy. Thus even after the end of the “days” of creation, we have to think of man as a being belonging not to the ground, but to the periphery of the earth.

How then was he brought down to the surface of the earth? How did the further densification from the condition into which Jahve-Elohim had placed him come about? Here we come to something described pretty fully in my *Occult Science*; we come to what we call the Luciferic influence. To

express more precisely what we mean by this, we must imagine that the Beings whom we have described as Luciferic practically poured themselves into the human astral body, so that after man had been built up through all the forces we have hitherto described, he received into himself the Luciferic influence. We shall understand what this means if we say that man's life of wish, of desire, everything anchored in the astral body, became permeated with the Luciferic element, hence became more violent, more passionate, more urged by greed, more self-centred; in short what we today call egotism, the inclination to be self-absorbed and self-isolated, the preoccupation with securing one's own inner comfort — all that entered into man with the Luciferic influence. Everything good or bad which can be classed as a permeation by inner comfort or satisfaction entered into man with the Luciferic influence. It was, to begin with, an alien influence. Out of the astral body as it had been hitherto, as it had been formed by the currents which streamed into it, another astral body now came into existence, one permeated by the Luciferic

influence. The result was that the body of warmth and air contracted, condensed further. It was only then that the man of flesh came into being. It was only then that this further densification occurred. The man of pre-Luciferic times was to be found in the elementary existence of warmth and air; the Luciferic influence insinuated itself into the fluid and solid part of man, it lives in all that is solid and liquid. It is not at all a figure of speech, but literally describes the situation when I say that through the contraction of the human body brought about by the Luciferic influence man became heavier, sank down out of the periphery to the surface of the earth. That was the expulsion from Paradise. Man acquired for the first time the force of gravity. It was the Luciferic influence which brought him down to earth, whereas he had hitherto dwelt in its periphery. Thus the Luciferic influence has to be reckoned among the real formative forces of man.

We find then a remarkable parallelism between descriptions derived solely from spiritual investigation and those in the Bible. Notice

nevertheless how in my *Occult Science* I deliberately kept out all the things that would have occurred to one so easily if one had wanted to introduce anything out of the Genesis account. In the description given in *Occult Science* I was careful to guard against that. I relied solely upon spiritual investigation. Now in a certain passage of that book we come to a description of the Luciferic influence given from quite a different aspect. But when we have come to that, we have reached the very period of time which is described in the Bible as man's temptation by the serpent, by Lucifer. We discover the parallel subsequently. Just as gravity, electricity and magnetism are forces which in a coarser way play their part today in the formation of our earth, so also the development of the earth could not have gone forward without the Luciferic influence. We have to reckon it as one of the essential earth-building forces. Hence oriental accounts of the creation, though not with such delicacy as that of the Bible, have also placed Paradise in the periphery of the earth and not on the earth's surface, and they conceive of the expulsion from Paradise as a

descent from the periphery to the earth itself. Here also, if we know how to interpret what is said, we find complete agreement between spiritual investigation and the Bible.

But now let us consider yet another event. We have stressed the point that things are not so easy for the spiritual investigator as they are for the sort of science which works on the rough principle that “in the night all cows are grey,” and traces back the most varied events to the same cause. The spiritual investigator has to see in cloud formation something quite different from the formation of water on the surface of the earth. We have spoken of the Cherubim as the directing powers in cloud formation, and of the Seraphim as the directing powers in the lightning flash that issues from the clouds. If now we look upon the expulsion from Paradise as really referring to a descent from the periphery, we are describing almost word for word how man fell through his own weight, and how he had to leave behind him the forces and the Beings who form the clouds and the lightning — the Cherubim with the flaming sword. Man falls from

the earth's periphery, out of the region where the Cherubim hold sway with their fiery swords of lightning. There we have a spiritual scientific version that confirms almost word for word the account of the expulsion from Paradise according to which the Godhead placed the Cherubim with the flame of the whirling sword before the gate of Paradise. When you realise this it becomes almost palpable that those ancient seers who gave us Genesis gazed with full powers of seership into the life of man weaving in the etheric heights, before he fell from the regions where the Seraphim and the Cherubim hold sway. So realistic are the Bible descriptions! They are not just similes or crude symbolism; they are the direct findings of clairvoyant consciousness.

Men today misunderstand the conceptions of ancient times. The Bible is criticised on all hands as if it were naively saying: "Paradise was a large garden planted with beautiful trees; lions and tigers roamed about, mingling with the human beings." Well, it is easy to criticise, and one flippant critic has gone so far as to ask what would

have happened to a man who was naive enough to stretch out his hand to one of these lions. If someone first invents a fantastic picture of something never intended by Genesis, it is easy to criticise it. This kind of outlook has only arisen in recent centuries. A Schoolman of the twelfth century would be astonished, if he could come back, to hear what he himself is supposed to have said about the Bible. It would never have occurred to a Schoolman to have such notions about the Bible as are prevalent today. Men could soon find this out if they really wanted to learn. If we studied Scholasticism properly we should soon see, what is clearly expressed in its writings, that it had an entirely different outlook. Even if there was no longer any consciousness that the Bible is a record of clairvoyant investigation, there was nevertheless still something very different from the materialistic and crude exegesis that came in with the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. It would never have occurred to anyone in the early centuries of the Middle Ages to think like that. Today it is very easy to criticise the Bible, as long as one ignores the fact that the ideas under attack

were only born a few centuries ago. Those who inveigh against the Bible the most vehemently are fighting a fantastic invention of the human mind, not the Bible; they are shadow-boxing. It is the task of Spiritual Science, by communicating its findings, to point once more to the true meaning of the Bible, and so clear the way for the tremendous impact it should make upon our souls when we learn to understand what resounds to us so impressively from ancient times.

Notes:

[1] In the English Authorised Version the word “Adam” does not appear until Ch. II, v.19 — but in Hebrew the same word is used for “man” (as in Ch. I, v.26, onwards).

LECTURE IX

AGAIN and again in these lectures we have been able to show how the Genesis account, rightly interpreted, has corroborated the findings of clairvoyant investigation. There remain a number of points still to clear up in this regard. The first thing will be to show with still greater precision the point of time at which the Genesis account falls in terms of spiritual scientific findings as to the evolution of our earth. I have already said that I put the beginning of Genesis at the time when the sun and the earth were about to separate, but we shall have to go more closely into this.

Those of you who have heard some of my earlier lectures, and also those who have studied the description of earth evolution in my *Occult Science*, will remember what great importance I attached to two significant moments in this

evolution. The first was the separation of the sun from the earth. This was a very important event. It had to take place at some time, for had the two cosmic bodies remained united, as in the first stage of earth existence, the course of human evolution could not have given to man his true earthly meaning. All that we include in the word “sun” — thus not only the elementary or physical constituents in the body of the sun, but also the spiritual Beings who belong to it — had to withdraw from the earth, or, if you prefer, had to extrude the earth, because, had those Beings remained united with it, their forces would have worked too strongly for man's welfare. They had to mitigate their forces by removing themselves from the terrestrial scene and working upon it from without. We are therefore concerned with a point of time when a number of Beings transfer the scene of their operations to a distance, so as to moderate their influence on the development of both man and animal. From a certain point of time the earth is left to itself, and, because its finer, more spiritual forces have withdrawn with the sun, undergoes a certain coarsening. But man, such as

he has become through the Saturn, Sun and Moon evolutions, still remained for a time with the earth. It was only very exalted Beings who withdrew with the sun and found their scene of activity outside.

After this separation, the earth still had within it all the substances and forces which go to make up the present moon. Man therefore was exposed to conditions which were much grosser than earth conditions proper later became, for the substance of the moon is very crass, as it were. One result was that, after the separation of the sun from the earth, the earth forces became ever more moonlike, ever denser. Another, that man himself was now exposed to the danger of wilting away, of becoming mummified, or at any rate of becoming mummified astrally. While, so long as the sun remained with the earth, conditions had been too fine, they now became too coarse. Consequently, as the development of the earth proceeded, man could thrive less and less by maintaining his connection with it. This is described in detail in my *Occult Science*.

We know from yesterday's lecture that men were still psycho-spiritual beings at this time, but that they were unable to unite with the earth on account of the density of the matter which streamed from the earth into its periphery so long as the moon remained with it. So it came about that the great majority of human souls had to relinquish their union with the earth. Here we come to something of great importance in the relationship between man and earth, something which happened during the time between the separation of the sun and that of the moon. During this interval human soul-spirits, except for a very small number, abandoned earthly conditions, and pressing upward into higher regions, continued their evolution upon the several planets belonging to our solar system, each according to the stage of his development. Some souls were fitted to pursue their evolution on Saturn, others on Mars, others again on Mercury, and so on. Only a very small number of the strongest soul-spirits remained in union with the earth. During this time the rest dwelt upon the earth's planetary neighbours. This came about at a time preceding (to use our own

terminology) the Lemurian age.

Then came that other important event, which took place as we know during the Lemurian time, whereby the moon with all its matter and all its forces was itself withdrawn from the earth. This brought about great changes in the earth, which now for the first time came into a condition in which the human being could thrive. Whereas the earth's forces would have been too spiritual had it remained united with the sun, they would have become too coarse had it remained with the moon. Hence the moon too withdrew, and both sun and moon Beings then worked upon the earth from without, thereby bringing it into a state of balance. And in this way the earth prepared itself to become the bearer of human existence. This all happened during the Lemurian age.

Evolution now makes a further advance, and little by little the human soul-spirits who had escaped to the planets begin to return again. That went on far into the Atlantean epoch. What had crystallised out as man during the latter part of Lemuria and during Atlantis was gradually endowed with soul-

spirits of differing characteristics, according to whether they came from Mars, or Mercury, or Jupiter and so on. This brought about great variety in earthly incarnations. Those of you who are familiar with the lectures I gave recently in Christiania know that this division of men into Mars-men, Saturn-men and so on was the origin of what later became racial differentiation. It is still possible today for the seer to recognise whether a man's soul has descended from this or that planet.

But it has also been emphasised — and it has been fully discussed in my *Occult Science* — that by no means all human souls abandoned the earth. What we might describe as the toughest souls were able to go on using earthly matter, and to remain with the earth. I have even mentioned the startling circumstance that there was an outstanding pair of humans who survived the densification of the earth. Spiritual investigation impels us to accept what to begin with seems incredible — that there was such a couple as Adam and Eve, and that the races which arose out of the return of souls from the cosmos came about through their union with

the descendants of that pair.

If we bear all this in mind we shall be able to come to a conclusion as to the point of time in our spiritual scientific chronology to which the Bible account refers. Let me remind you that after the six or seven “days” of creation have been described, there comes what the superficial approach of modern biblical criticism takes for a second, separate account of creation; really it is quite consistent with the first. I have often described how during the progress of earthly evolution from the Lemurian to the Atlantean age a kind of cooling down of the earth took place. I went into this in detail in my *Occult Science*. During Lemuria we must think of the earth as a fundamentally fiery body, as having the element of fire spurting in it; the cooling-down process only began with the transition to Atlantis. During the Atlantean age the surface of the earth was still very different from what it became later; far on into the Atlantean age the surrounding atmosphere was still not water-free. The earth was completely covered with volumes of watery mist. The

separation between rain and rain-free air which we have today did not exist in those ancient times. Everything was shrouded in watery mist, laden with all kinds of smoky fumes and other matter which had not at that time assumed liquid form. Much which today is solid at that time still permeated the atmosphere in the form of steam. And far on into Atlantis everything was permeated by those volumes of watery mist.

But that was the very period when what had previously existed in a much more spiritual condition began to take on physical form. In the condition described as the third “day” of creation we must not think that the forms of individual plants, as we know them today, sprouted from the earth, but we must give full weight to the phrase “after his kind,” that is, in species form; the reference is rather to the group-souls of the plants which were present in the earth in an etheric-astral state. What was described on the third “day” as the creation of the plants would not have been visible to external senses, it would only have been seen by clairvoyant organs of perception. It was during the

time lasting from the end of Lemuria right on into Atlantis, the time when a state of mist developed in the periphery of the earth, and then gradually grew lighter, that what previously had been etheric became transformed into a condition somewhat resembling what we know today. The etheric became more and more physical. Strange as it may sound, the plant kingdom visible to the external eye did not develop until much later than the time indicated in the account of the third “day” of creation. It did not come about until the time of Atlantis. The geological conditions necessary for the development of the visible plants of today cannot be ascribed to a very early period.

The course of events from the end of Lemuria right on into the Atlantean time can be summarised as follows. The earth was enveloped in dense volumes of mist, charged with clouds of the smoke of various substances, later to be transformed into the crust of the earth. The beings “according to their kind,” visible to clairvoyant consciousness, had not yet been brought to physical densification; and the fertilising of the earth's soil with what still

hovered in the atmosphere as water had not yet taken place; that only happened later. How could the Bible give this expression? It would have to say at a certain point: “Even after the conclusion of the seven days of creation, after the completion of what took place during Lemuria, still none of the plants we know today sprouted forth from the earth, the earth was still covered in mist.”

The Bible does in fact say this. If you read on, after the description of the seven days, you find it mentioned that there were still no herbs, no shrubs, on the earth, although it had been said earlier that the forms of the plants had arisen in species form. On the first occasion the reference was to something of a group-soul nature, the second time to something which sprang forth from the earth as vegetation in individual physical form. And the Atlantean mist is described as in fact it was after the “days” of creation. The words *For the Lord God had not caused it to rain upon the earth* indicate that the condensation of the water in the atmosphere to rain only came about after the “days” of creation.

Thus we find a profound wisdom here. But I can assure you that nothing from this document influenced the description given in my *Occult Science*. I purposely refrained from consulting the Bible, and I might say that there were times when I tried hard to reach results which differed from those of this ancient tradition. Modern materialistic ideas of the Bible make it inevitable that one should not readily read into it any of the facts of Spiritual Science. But Spiritual Science itself constrained us to find in the Bible what we have ventured to say in these lectures, and our own reluctance notwithstanding, we have at last been obliged to recognise in the Bible what spiritual investigation had previously discovered.

Having made our position clear, we may now go on to ask where in the Genesis account we have to place the departure of human souls to the neighbouring planetary bodies, or planetary Beings, brought about by the hardening condition of the earth. We must put it at the point where it says that through the formation of the sound-ether the upper substances are separated from the lower.

I went into that fully in my description of the second “day.” And when one follows it all with the eye of the seer one realises that along with what withdrew from the earth, which the Elohim called “heaven,” there withdrew at the same time the human souls. So it is the second “day” of creation which corresponds with the withdrawal of the human soul-spirits into the periphery of the earth at a definite time between the withdrawal of the sun and that of the moon.

But we must bear in mind that there is an important corollary to this. What was it exactly that went out into the cosmos at that time? In which member of man have we to look for it today? Of course it does not exist today as it was at that time, but we can nevertheless find something corresponding to it in certain members of our present human organisation. Let us look at the human being for a moment. Today we distinguish in him four members, the physical, etheric and astral bodies and the bearer of the ego. We know that the physical and etheric bodies during sleep remain in the bed. When we are

concerned with those ancient times which are described in the second and on into the third “day” of creation, we cannot speak of physical and etheric bodies as we know them today. These were only formed later out of earthly substance. All there was of the human being at that time belonged to the part of man which today withdraws in sleep from the other human members (grown denser since that time); it belonged to the astral being of man. It is the forces working in the astral body that we must have in mind, when we contemplate the human soul-spirit which at that time took leave of the earth in order to thrive better upon the surrounding planets. It is those forces we have when with our astral body we are outside our physical and etheric bodies, which we have to look for on the surrounding planets after the second “day.”

We know, however, that when today man in the state of sleep is with his finer members outside his physical and etheric bodies, he is so to say articulated into the astral environment of our earth, into the forces and influences of the members of

our planetary system. Man is then united with the planetary Beings. But in those far-away times man was not only united with the planets in some kind of sleep, but after his flight from the earth he was united with them all the time. Thus we have to bear in mind that during the third “day” of creation human souls — with the exception of those I have mentioned who stayed behind — were not on the earth, but in the region of the planets; there they had settled and there they developed further. But meanwhile, on the earth, those who, as the strongest, the toughest, had remained behind were developing. And their evolution consisted in clothing themselves more and more with earthly matter, so that there below on the earth, what we now have during the day as our physical and etheric bodies was being prepared. It was in order that these etheric and physical bodies should be able to play their part in every phase of earth development that some souls were preserved on the earth. By that means the etheric and physical bodies which were in course of preparation were propagated even while the moon forces were still united with the earth.

If we bring before our souls a true picture of the state of things after the withdrawal of the sun, we have to say that for the most part what is of a soul-spiritual nature in man is on the neighbouring planets in the circumference of the earth. The sun had already departed, but if at that time a man had been able to stand upon the earth, he would have seen dense formations of misty, smoky and steaming cloud upon its surface. No trace of sun was to be seen. The sun with its forces was far away, and only little by little began to take effect on earth by causing this volume of smoky mist gradually to lighten, and to assume in the circumference of the earth the form which the development of humanity needed. And if a man had been able to look upon evolution from without, he would have seen that it was only very gradually that the fog and the smoke lifted and that the forces of the sun began, not only to act through the dark envelope of smoke, but truly to make themselves perceptible. Or let us say that we are coming to the fourth “day” of creation, and getting near to the event we call the separation of the moon. Had a man been living on the earth at that

time, he would have seen the rays of the sun piercing through the masses of smoke and steam. And while this was happening the earth gradually came into a state favourable to human incarnation, a state in which human beings could once more live. From the physical descendants of those who had remained with the earth throughout, bodies could now be produced for the soul-spirits who were returning from the periphery of the earth.

Thus we have two kinds of propagation. What later became the human physical and etheric body derives from those who remained on earth. The soul-spiritual element comes into it from the periphery. To begin with this approach from the neighbourhood of the planets was a spiritual influx. At the moment when the sun had penetrated the clouds of steam and smoke, after the moon had left it, the desire awoke in the soul-spirits of the neighbouring planets to come down again into this earthly region. When from the earth the sun became visible on the one hand and the moon on the other, the urge to descend to the earth grew more pressing in these souls. That is the

reality lying behind the words used in describing the fourth “day” of creation: *And God made two great lights; the greater light to rule the day, and the lesser light to rule the night: he made the stars also.* For by the stars are meant the planets surrounding the earth. Thus the deed which brought about a kind of balance was produced on the one hand by the sun and on the other by the moon, and at the same time the human souls who wanted to incarnate on the earth prepared for their descent.

This places the fourth “day” of creation at a point in the Lemurian age, after the exit of the moon, when those conditions come about which you find described in my *Occult Science*, and which you can summarise in the words: “The human soul-spirits are pressing back to earth again.”

But now we must turn our attention for a little to the accompanying spiritual conditions. What we have just been considering is what afterwards became physical. We must become ever clearer that always behind the coarser lies a finer, and behind the physical lies a spiritual. With the exit of

the sun the Elohim withdrew, transferring their scene of action to the exterior, so that they could work towards the earth from the periphery. But not all of them went. A part of the Elohim remained united with the earth, even while the earth still had the moon forces within it. And that part of the spiritual forces of the Elohim which remained united with the earth is in a certain way connected with all the *good* effects of the moon forces. For we must speak of good moon influences too. After the separation of the sun, everything on earth, human beings especially, would have been constrained towards a state of mummification, a hardened, woody condition. The human being would have been lost to the earth. The earth would have become a desert waste if it had retained the moon forces within its body. *Within* the earth the moon forces could never have been beneficial. Why was it that they had nevertheless to remain along with the earth for a time? Because humanity had to endure every phase of the earth's condition, because its toughest representatives had to survive the moon-densification. But then, after the moon had left the earth, its forces, which otherwise

would have led to the death of the earth, became beneficial. After the withdrawal of the moon forces everything revived again, so that even weaker souls were able to descend and incarnate in human bodies. Thus by becoming her neighbour, the moon became earth's benefactor — which from within the earth it never could have been. The Beings who guided this whole series of events are the great benefactors of man. Who were they? They were the very Beings who had just united themselves with the moon, who then wrested the moon from the earth, in order to guide men further in earth evolution. We know from the Genesis account that the leading Guiding Powers were the Elohim. And the forces which brought about the mighty event of the moon's withdrawal and thereby enabled man to assume his proper nature were none other than the very forces which brought about the cosmic advancement of the Elohim to Jahve-Elohim. Part of the Elohim forces remained united with the moon and then withdrew it from our earth. Thus Jahve-Elohim is intimately bound up with what we find in creation as the body of the moon.

Now let us picture to ourselves more closely what all this really signified for man in his earthly incarnation. If man had remained tied to an earth which had the sun within it, then he would have become a mere cipher, fettered to the Elohim; he would not have been able to sever himself, and attain to independent being. But because the Elohim withdrew with the sun, man was enabled to remain with the earth and to preserve his own soul-spiritual life. If it had stopped there, however, man would have become hardened, he would have met his death. Why had man to come into a condition which provided even the possibility of his death? In order that he might become free, in order that he might cut himself off from the Elohim, in order that he might become an independent being. In the moon element man has something within him which really leads to decay, to death, and he would have received too big a dose of this element, had the moon not withdrawn. But you see how it all follows that it is this moon element which, as cosmic substance, is closely connected with human independence.

Present conditions on earth were brought about after the separation of the moon. The influence of the moon is thus not so strong now as it once was. But as far as the foundations of his physical and etheric bodies are concerned, man lived through the moon period too, he lived through the time when the earth was united with the moon, and therefore he has within him something of what is up there on the moon. He has preserved it in his physical and etheric bodies ever since. Thus man has the moon element within him. The earth could not have supported this moon element within it, but man has it in a certain way within him. Thus he has the disposition to be something other than a mere earth being.

As men we have the earth under us; the moon had to be cast out of the earth, but not until the right dose of its nature had been injected into man himself. The *earth* contains no trace of moon in it; it is we who bear that within ourselves. What would have become of the earth if the moon had not been wrested from it? Look at the moon for once with rather different eyes. The whole

constitution of its matter is different from that of the earth. The astro-physicist speaking from the material aspect says that the moon has no air, scarcely any water, which means that it is far denser than the earth. It therefore contains forces which would lead the earth beyond the degree of hardness which earth actually has. These moon forces would make the earth physically harder, more fissured. To get a picture of what the earth would become if the moon forces were still in it, think of a very wet, muddy road becoming dustier and dustier as the water in it evaporates. You can see the whole process happening when after a fall of rain the mud in the street gradually turns to dust. Something like that would have happened to the earth if the moon forces had remained within it — it would have cracked and crumbled into lumps of dust. Something like that *will* happen to the earth one day, when it has fulfilled its task — it will crumble into cosmic dust. Earthly matter will be dissolved in cosmic space as cosmic dust when man has passed through his evolution upon it. Thus we can say that the earth would have become dust, it had the tendency to become dust, to

crumble into particles of dust. It has only been saved from doing so already by the withdrawal of the moon.

But in man something has remained of this disposition towards dust. Through all the circumstances which I have described to you man receives into his being something of moony earth-dust. Those Beings connected with the moon have actually introduced into the human bodily nature something not derived from the earth which we have in our environment since the withdrawal of the moon; there has been imprinted into the human body something of the moon-earth-dust. But since Jahve-Elohim is united with this moon-nature, it means that it is Jahve-Elohim who has imprinted this moon-earth-dust into the human body. So there must have been a point in the course of earth evolution when it would be correct to say that in the cosmic progress of the Elohim Jahve-Elohim imprinted into the human body the earth-dust, the moon-earth-dust. These are the depths beneath that passage in the Bible which says that Jahve-Elohim formed man of the dust of the earth. For that is

what it says. None of the translations which convey that Jahve-Elohim formed man out of “a clod of earth” make any sense. Jahve-Elohim imprinted into man the earth-dust. [1]

Not a few of the startling discoveries we have already made have filled us with awestruck veneration in face of the revelations uttered in the Bible by the ancient seers and rediscovered in our own day by spiritual scientific research. But here, in the words “And Jahve-Elohim imprinted in man's bodily nature the moon-earth-dust,” the tale told by the clairvoyant authors of the Genesis narrative may well inspire in us a sensation of almost overwhelming reverence. And if those ancient seers were aware how the tidings which made them vocal came to them out of the realm wherein the Elohim, and Jahve-Elohim, were active — if they knew themselves to be receiving their wisdom from the very region of the World-creators — then they could say: “There is streaming into us as knowledge, as wisdom, as intelligence, the very Same that once worked within those Beings, giving shape to the earth

itself in the beginning.”

Therefore we can look up in holy awe to those ancient seers, who themselves looked up into the regions whence their inspiration descended, into the realm of the Elohim and of Jahve-Elohim. By what name could they have called those Beings, who underpinned alike the creation itself and their own knowledge of it?

What sort of word could they have had for them — unless it were one which filled their whole hearts in the moment of receiving this revelation of the world-creative powers? Looking up to these, they said to themselves: “Our revelation flows down into us from divine-spiritual Beings. We can find no word for those Beings, save only that one which expresses the holy awe we feel. ‘They that beget the holy awe we feel.’” If we translate that into ancient Hebrew how does it run? “They that beget the holy awe we feel” — it has the ring of *Elohim* — the Hebrew word for those before whom man feels a holy awe. And in such a way we may approach the link which is to be found between the feelings and perceptions of the

ancient seers and the name of those Beings to whom they attributed the creation and also their own power of revealing the creation.

Notes:

[1] The English Authorised Version says: *And the Lord God formed man of the dust of the ground.*

LECTURE X

FROM all that has been said in the last few days, and especially from what was said yesterday, you will have gathered at about what time we have placed the Genesis story. In fact we have pointed out that the first momentous words of the Bible mark the moment when we should say in terms of Spiritual Science that the substance constituting the earth and sun, hitherto one body, makes ready to separate. Then follows the separation, and during its course what is described in the opening verses takes place. The biblical description of the creation then goes on to cover all that happens until far on into the Lemurian age, right up to the separation of the moon. What has been described by Spiritual Science as coming after the withdrawal of the moon, that is, at the end of Lemuria and in the beginning of Atlantis, took

place *after* the “days” of creation. We pointed that out yesterday. We also pointed out the deep significance of the statement that man received in his body the imprint of the earth-moon-dust. This coincided with the cosmic event which we have called the advancement of the Elohim to become JahveElohim. We had to think of this advance as more or less coinciding with the beginning of the moon's activity from outside. Thus we must think of the process of the moon's separation, and its activity from without, as associated with that Being who represents the Elohim as one undivided entity, with Him whom we call Jahve-Elohim. The first phase of the action of the moon upon the earth coincides with the imprinting of the earth-moon material into the human body. The human body, which hitherto had consisted solely of warmth, was now endowed with something expressed as follows: *And the Lord God ... breathed into his nostrils the breath of life; and man became a living soul* — or, let us say, a living being.

We must not fail once again to notice the aptness, the grandeur, the power of the biblical words! I

have impressed upon you that the proper earthly incarnation of man depended upon his being able to wait in his spiritual nature in spiritual surroundings until suitable conditions were present in the earth itself; so that it was his late assumption of his bodily nature which enabled him to become a mature being. Had he come down into his body earlier, let us say, during the events of the fifth “day,” he could only have become a being resembling physically the beings of the air and of the water. How does Genesis describe the being of man? Wonderfully! The passage is a model of accurate and appropriate wording. We are told that the group-souls who descended into earthly matter on the fifth “day” became living creatures — became what we today call living creatures. Man did not descend at that time. The group-souls who still remained above in the great reservoir of the spirit did not descend until later. And even on the sixth “day” it was the animals nearest to man, the earth-animals proper, which came down first. Thus man was not able to descend into solid matter even during the first part of the sixth “day,” for if he had imprinted the earth-forces into himself at that time

he would have become a creature physically resembling the animals. The group-souls of the higher animals descended first and populated the earth, as distinct from the air and the sea. Only after that, little by little, came about conditions favourable to the formation of the prototype of humanity.

How was it achieved? It is conveyed to us in memorable words when we are told that the Elohim set about combining their activities in order to make man after the image I have described to you. This earth-man arose because the Elohim, each with his different capacity, worked together as a group to achieve a common purpose. Man began by being the common purpose of the Elohim as a group.

We must try to get a closer idea of what man was like on the sixth “day.” He was not yet as he is today. The physical body which we find in man today only came later with the inbreathing by Jahve of the *breath of life*. The event which is described as the creation of man by the Elohim took place before the earth-dust had been

imprinted into his bodily nature. What was he like — this man brought into existence by the Elohim, still in the Lemurian age?

Remember what I have often said about the character and nature of the man of today. It is only as regards his higher members that their physical humanity is the same in all men. As regards their sex we must distinguish. The male has a feminine etheric body, and the female a masculine etheric body. How did it come about? This differentiation, this separation into male and female, came about relatively late, after the “days” of creation. There was no such differentiation in the human being who arose on the sixth “day” as the common purpose of the Elohim. At that time all human beings had a bodily nature in common. We can best describe it (so far as representation is possible at all) by saying that the physical body was more etheric and the etheric body somewhat denser than is the case today. A differentiation between physical and etheric, a densification on the side of the physical, only occurred later under the influence of Jahve-Elohim. You will appreciate

that we cannot speak of the human creation of the Elohim as separately male and female in the sense of today; the Elohim-man was at the same time both male and female, undifferentiated. Thus man, in the sense expressed by the Elohim in the words *Let us make man*, was still undifferentiated, still male and female at the same time. Through this deed of the Elohim the bisexual man was created. That is the meaning of the words translated *male and female created he them*. The words do not refer to man and woman in the sense of today, but to the undifferentiated man, the male-female man.

I am well aware that countless biblical commentators have objected to this interpretation and have sought to throw ridicule on what earlier distinguished commentators have maintained — which is nevertheless the truth. They take exception to the view that the Elohim-man was male-female, and that therefore the male-female is what was made in the image of the Elohim. I should like to ask such commentators on what they base their view. It cannot be upon clairvoyant investigation, for that will never give anything

other than what I am saying. If it is upon external investigation, I should like to ask them how, in face of tradition, they justify any other interpretation. At least people ought to be told what the biblical tradition is. When through clairvoyant investigation one first discovers the true facts, then life and light breaks into the text, and minor discrepancies in the tradition no longer matter, because knowledge of the truth enables one to read the text correctly. But it is very different if one approaches the matter from the point of view of philology. One must nevertheless understand clearly that, even as late as the early centuries of the Christian era, there was nothing in the first chapters of the Bible to mislead anyone into reading the text as it is read today. There were no vowels at all, and the text was in such a condition that even the division into separate words had yet to be made. The dots which in Hebrew signify the vowels were only inserted later. Without the preparation which Spiritual Science gives, what claim has anyone to offer an interpretation of the original text, of which he can say conscientiously, and with scholarship, that it is reliable?

Thus in the Elohim-creation we have man at a preparatory stage. All the processes which are included in a term such as “human propagation” were at that time more etheric, more spiritual. They remained at a higher level. It was the deed of Jahve-Elohim which first made man into what he has become today. That had to be preceded by the creation in due order of other, lower beings. Thus the animals became living creatures by what one might almost call a premature act of creation. The same expression *nephesch*, [1] living creature, is applied to these animals as is ultimately applied to man. But how is it applied to man? At the moment when Jahve-Elohim intervenes and makes man into the man of today, it is said that Jahve-Elohim imprints *n'schamah*. [2] It is through having a higher member implanted into him that man himself becomes a living being.

Note what a very fruitful concept the Bible, of all books, introduces into the theory of evolution! Of course it would be foolish not to recognise that, as regards his external form, man belongs to the highest stage of the animal kingdom. This small

concession may be made to Darwinism. But the essential thing is that man did not become a living being in the same way as the other, lower beings, whose nature is described as nephesh; man was first endowed with a higher member of his being, a previously prepared soul-spiritual element.

Here we come to another parallel between the ancient Hebrew doctrine and our own Spiritual Science. When we speak of the human soul, we distinguish between sentient soul, intellectual soul and consciousness soul. We know that these first arose in their soul-spiritual form during the first three “days” of creation. It was then that their characteristic tendencies were formed. But this inner soul-nature was not clothed in physical form, was not, so to say, impressed into a physical body until much later. Thus we have to understand that first there arises the spiritual, that this spiritual is then invested with the astral and then gradually condenses into the etheric-physical; it is only then that what was previously spiritual is imprinted into the body as the breath of life. Thus what was implanted as a seed into the human being by

Jahve-Elohim had already been prepared earlier. It was there in the womb of the Elohim. Now it is imprinted into man, whose bodily nature had been built up from another direction. Thus it is something which enters into man from without. This impress of *n'schamah* first made it possible to implant in man the predisposition to, the rudiments of, the ego nature. For these old Hebrew expressions *nephesch*, *ruach*, *n'schamah* correspond to our spiritual scientific terms sentient soul, intellectual soul and consciousness soul respectively.

Thus this further evolution is very complicated. We must think of all that happened on the six “days” of creation, that is to say, we must think of the work of the Elohim before they advanced to Jahve-Elohim, as having taken place in higher, spiritual realms; and what we can see today in the world as physical man first came about through the deed of Jahve-Elohim.

Of all this which we find in the Bible — and again now in clairvoyant perception — and which first enables us to understand the inner nature of man,

the Greek philosophers still had a consciousness derived from their various initiation centres — Plato especially, but even Aristotle still knew something of it. Anyone familiar with the works of Plato and Aristotle knows that in Aristotle there was still an awareness that man first became a living being through the introduction of a higher soul-spiritual member, whereas the lower animals went through different evolutionary processes. Aristotle expressed it somewhat as follows. He says that the lower animals became what they were through other processes of evolution; but that at the time when the forces which are active in the animal were able to become effective, the human soul-spiritual being, which still hovered in higher regions, was not yet allowed to acquire an earthly body, otherwise it would have remained at the animal stage. The human being had to wait; in him the lower, the animal stages, had to be ousted from their sovereignty through the implanting of the human member. To express this Aristotle made use of the word *phtheiresthai* (phtheiresthai). By this he meant to say, “Of course, superficially speaking, man has the same bodily functions as the animal,

but in the animal these functions are supreme, whereas in man the bodily functions have been dethroned and have to follow a higher principle.” That is the meaning of the word *fqeiresqai*.

The same truth lies behind the biblical story of the creation. Through the implanting of *n'schamah* the lower members were dethroned. In the bearer of his ego man has acquired a higher member. But his earlier, more etheric nature was thereby brought down a stage and became differentiated. Man acquired an external, bodily member, and an inner, more etheric member; the one became denser and the other more rarefied. The principle was repeated in man which we have come to recognise as running through the whole of evolution. We saw how warmth condensed to air and rarefied to light, how air condensed to water and rarefied into sound-ether and so on. The same process takes place in man at higher levels. The male-female becomes differentiated into man and woman, and moreover in such a way that the denser physical body appears on the outside, the more rarefied, etheric, invisible body goes inwards. We could

also call this the progress from Elohim-man to man the creation of Jahve-Elohim. The man we know today is the creation of JahveElohim, and the sixth “day” of creation corresponds with the Lemurian age, in which we speak of the male-female human being.

Now the Bible speaks of yet a seventh “day” of creation, and we are told that on this seventh “day” the Elohim rested. What does that actually mean? We only understand it aright if we realise that this is the very time when the Elohim rise, when they experience their promotion to become Jahve-Elohim. But we must not conceive Jahve-Elohim as the entire hierarchy of the Elohim united; we must understand that the Elohim give up, so to speak, only a part of their Being to the moon-Being, and hold the rest in reserve; and that in this older part of their Being they continue their own further evolution. So far as this part of them is concerned, their work is no longer devoted to the creation of man. That part of the Elohim which has become Jahve-Elohim continues to work on man. The other part does not work directly upon the

earth, it devotes itself to its own evolution. That is what is meant by rest from earthly work, by the Sabbath day, by the seventh “day” of creation.

And now we must call attention to something else of importance. If everything that I have just been saying is correct, then we must regard the Jahve-man, the man into whom Jahve impressed his own Being, as the direct successor of the more etheric, more delicate man who was formed on the sixth “day.” Thus there is a direct line from the more etheric man, who is still male-female — from the bi-sexual man — to the physical man. Physical man is the descendant, in a densified form, of the etheric man. If one wanted to describe the Jahve-man who passes over into Atlantis, one would have to say: “And the man who was formed by the Elohim on the sixth ‘day’ of creation developed further into the unisexual man, the Jahve-man.” Those who followed after the seven “days” of creation are the descendants of the Elohim-men, and thus of what came into being during the first six “days.”

Again the Bible is sublime when, in the second chapter, it tells us that the Jahve-man is in fact a descendant of the heavenly man, the man who was formed by the Elohim on the sixth “day.” The Jahve-man is the descendant of the Elohim-man in precisely the same way as the son is the descendant of the father. The Bible tells us this in the fourth verse of the second chapter, which says “Those who are to follow are the descendants, the subsequent generations, of the heavenly man.” That is what it really says. But if you take a modern translation, you find the remarkable sentence: *These are the generations of the heavens and of the earth when they were created, in the day that the Lord God made the earth and the heavens.* Usually we find the whole hierarchy of the Elohim called “God,” and Jahve-Elohim called “the Lord God” — *the Lord God made the earth and the heavens.* I ask you to look at this sentence carefully and try honestly to find a reasonable meaning for it. Anyone who claims to do so had better not look on ahead in his Bible, for the word used here is *tol'doth*, [3] which means “subsequent generations”; and the same word is used in the

later chapter which tells of the subsequent generations of Noah. Thus here it is speaking of the Jahve-men as the descendants, the subsequent generations, of the heavenly Beings, in the same way as there it speaks of the descendants of Noah. Thus this passage must be translated something like this: "In what follows we are speaking of the descendants of the heaven-and-earth beings who were created by the Elohim and further developed by Jahve-Elohim." Thus the Bible too looks upon the Jahve-men as the descendants of the Elohim-men. Anyone who wants to presuppose a fresh account of the creation, because it says that God created man, should also look at the fifth chapter, which begins *This is the book of the generations* (the word used there is the very same as in the other passages — *tol'doth*), and should assume a third account there — thus making his Rainbow Bible really complete! That way you will get a whole knocked up out of Bible fragments, but will no longer have the Bible. If we could go on longer, we should be able to elucidate what is said in chapter five too.

Thus, when we go deeply into these things, we see that there is full agreement between the biblical account of the creation and what we can establish through Spiritual or Occult Science. This leads us to ask why the Bible account is in a more or less pictorial form. What do these pictures represent? And then we realise that they too are the result of clairvoyant experience. Just as today the eye of the seer gazes in the supersensible upon the origin of our earth existence, so too did those who originally composed the Bible story gaze upon the supersensible. It was by clairvoyant experience that the facts originally given to us were acquired. When we set to work to construct prehistory from the point of view of purely physical observation, we start from the traces of it which are extant and discoverable by external means, and the farther back we go in physical life and physical origins the more hazy the physical forms become. But in this misty element spiritual Beings hold sway. And man himself in his spiritual part was originally within them. And if we pursue our study of its origin as far back as the times described in Genesis, we come to the original spiritual

condition of our earth itself. The “days” of creation refer to spiritual stages of development, only to be grasped by spiritual investigation. What the Bible is telling us is that the physical is little by little formed out of the spiritual.

When the seer gazes upon the facts which are described for us in Genesis, he finds to begin with only spiritual processes. The physical eye would see absolutely nothing; it would gaze into a void. But, as we have seen, time goes on. Little by little for the seer the solid crystallises out of the spiritual, just as ice is formed out of water and solidifies. Out of the flowing sea of the astral, of the Devachanic, emerges what can now be seen by the physical eye. Thus, as clairvoyant observation proceeds, within the picture which to begin with has to be understood as purely spiritual, the physical emerges like a crystallisation. It follows that at an earlier time physical eyes would not have been able to discover the human being. Right up to the sixth and seventh “days” of creation, that is, right up to our Lemurian age, man could not have been seen by the physical eye; at that time he

only existed spiritually. That is the great difference between a true theory of evolution and a fancy one. The fancy one assumes only a physical process of development. But man did not originate by lower beings evolving to human stature. It is utterly absurd to imagine that an animal form can be transformed into the higher, human form. During the time when the animal forms came into being, forming their physical bodies below, man had already long been in existence, but it is only later that he descends and takes his place beside the animal natures which had descended much earlier. Anyone who cannot look upon evolution in this way is beyond help; he is hypnotised as it were by modern concepts, he is influenced, not by natural scientific facts, but by contemporary opinion.

If we want to connect the coming into being of man with that of all other creatures, we must say that first there appear two branches, the birds and the marine animals; [4] then, as a special offshoot, come the land animals; the birds and marine animals came into existence on the fifth “day” of

creation, the land animals on the sixth. And then came man, only not by producing the same line further, not as a continuation of the series, but by a descent upon the earth. That is the true theory of evolution, and it is contained more exactly in the Bible than in any modern textbook which surrenders to materialistic fantasy.

These are a few fragmentary remarks such as always seem to be required in the last lecture of a Cycle. To follow up adequately every aspect of such a theme as this would take months; there is so very much in this Genesis story of creation. In our Cycles we can never do more than touch upon things, and that is all I have attempted to do this time. I should like to emphasise once more that it has not been so very easy for me to give this particular course; nor will any of my hearers readily realise how difficult it is to reach the depths upon which the Bible story is based, how hard it is to find the true parallel between already ascertained spiritual scientific facts and the corresponding passages in the Bible. If one works conscientiously, the task is an extraordinarily

exacting one. It is so often assumed that the eye of the seer reaches with ease everywhere — that one has only to look, and everything follows of itself. An inexperienced person often thinks, when confronted with a problem, that he will easily be able to solve it, whereas the further he probes the more numerous are the difficulties which present themselves. This is so even in ordinary, external research, and when one leaves the physical and plunges into clairvoyant investigation, then the real difficulties begin to show themselves, and with them the feeling of the great responsibility incurred in speaking of these things at all. Nevertheless I think I may say that I have not made use of a single word in the whole of this Cycle which cannot stand, which is not as far as it goes an adequate expression in our own language of the right way to conceive these things. But it was certainly not easy.

There is much that I could still say. Especially something which has been borne in upon us at every stage during these lectures — and that is the need for anthroposophical teaching so to permeate

our hearts as to lift us with all the strength of our inner life to ever higher forms of perception, to an ever larger-hearted comprehension of the world. Whether we become better men in the intellectual, feeling and moral spheres — that is the touchstone for the fruitfulness of what we gather in the spiritual-scientific field. To study the parallel between spiritual-scientific investigation and the Bible can be particularly fruitful; for it enables us to experience how we ourselves are the “primal cause,” the “primal state,” as Jacob Boehme would have said, in that supersensible spiritual womb whence also came those very Elohim who developed into Jahve-Elohim, into that higher form of evolution, in order to bring about the great goal of their activity, which we call man. Let us comprehend our origin with due reverence, but also with a due sense of our responsibility. The Elohim and Jahve-Elohim gave their highest forces to the beginning of our evolution. Let us look upon this our origin as laying upon us an obligation to absorb into our human nature more and more of the spiritual forces which in the course of subsequent evolution have entered into

the development of the earth.

We have spoken of the influence of Lucifer. Because of this influence something which lay in the womb of that spirituality in which man too originated remained there for the time being; it came forth later in the incarnation of the Christ in the body of Jesus of Nazareth. Since that time the Christ has worked in the earth as another divine principle. And contemplation of the great truths of Genesis ought to point us to the duty of taking more and more into our own being the spiritual Being of the Christ; for only by permeating ourselves with the Christ principle shall we be able to fulfil our human task; only so shall we become on the earth more and more what we were predisposed to be in those times with which the biblical story of creation is concerned.

Thus such a series of lectures as this can not only give us knowledge, but can stir forces in our souls. Even if we forget much of its detail, may what we have learnt through a closer examination of the biblical story of creation go on working as power in our souls. I may perhaps be allowed to say this

at the close of these lectures, during which we have tried to immerse ourselves in our anthroposophical life. Let us try to take with us the strength which should flow from this teaching. Let us carry it away with us, let us fructify our outside life with this strength. Whatever we may be doing, in whatever worldly profession we may be engaged, this strength can warm and ripen our creative activity as well as intensify our joy, our happiness. No one who has rightly grasped the sublime origin of human existence can go on living without taking this knowledge as a germinal force of blessing and joy for the rest of his life. When you try to carry out deeds of love, let the truth about the mighty origin of men shine forth from your eyes, and thus you will best reveal what anthroposophical teaching is. Our deeds will proclaim its truth, rejoicing those around us, conferring blessing, refreshment and health upon our own spirit, soul and body. We ought to be better, stronger, healthier human beings through having absorbed anthroposophical teaching. May this above all be the effect of this Cycle! It should be a seed which sinks into the soul of the hearer

only to spring up again and bear fruit for those around us. Thus we go our separate ways, while our spirits remain united, and we try to work together to translate this teaching into life. Let us permeate ourselves with this spirit, without weakening, until the moment when we are able to meet again not only in the spirit but in the flesh.

Notes:

[1]

נפש

Diagram 12

[2]

נשמה

Diagram 13

[3]

תולדת

Diagram 14

[4] Dr. Steiner draws on the blackboard.